

# MAU MAU: A REVOLUTION BETRAYED

Maina wa Kīnyattī

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*In memory of Dedan Kīmaathi, the Commander-in-Chief of the Kenya Land Freedom Army, who was executed by the British imperialists on February 18, 1957. Kīmaathi was not only the commander of Kenya's Freedom Army, but a firm and true patriot. He taught us the meaning of patriotism.*

## **KENYA**

Our country has a president. It has a parliament, a constitution, a flag, a national anthem and a seat in the United Nations. But it is a neocolonial state—a client state of imperialism.

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## PREFACE

This is a revised and expanded edition. The first edition was printed in 1992 and it contained two main chapters, a Foreword, several photographs on Mau Mau guerilla leaders and an Appendix: Detention of Makhan Singh. In this edition, I have improved and re-arranged the previous chapters and added four more chapters, three appendices plus a Foreword to the edition.

I am grateful to Kamoji wa Waciira for reading the first original manuscript and giving me his thoughtful advice and constructive ideological criticism. Thanks to Wanjikū wa Ngūgī and Mwangi wa Mūtahi for reading the revised and expanded manuscript. Their comments and suggestions enriched this book. It is also important to note that Wanjikū along with Nyambura wa Kīhūngi provided technical assistance and without their consistent effort it would have been much difficult to produce this edition.



## FOREWORD TO THE SECOND EDITION

Before the conquest of our country by the British imperialist hordes in the 1880's, our people were at different stages of historical and economic development. Their main modes of production were a mixture of communalism, slavery and feudalism. The elements of primitive communalism, dominated by peasantry, were strong and more developed. The seeds of slavery and feudalism were also very much in the making in other parts of the country, particularly in the coastal areas. Largely, the system of land tenure was based on communalism. Hence, the land was owned collectively and individuals used it according to their prevailing requirements. But slowly the system of owning land, though not very institutionalized, was taking place. People, except the nomadic communities, were starting to partition land and informally own it privately. Sons were encouraged to think in terms of settling on their fathers' land. Their fathers' land concept was more loitative than possessive. This socio-economic evolution and its political dynamism would most likely have continued to a higher stage in production and technology if the European invaders did not interrupt it and impose colonial economy and cultural imperialism.

The imposition of colonialism meant that our country was not only to become part of the economy of European capitalism, but was also to come under the political enslavement of western imperialism. Consequently, it was reduced to a land of lowest income in the world—a wretched hell where poverty, famine and diseases were rampant.

The claim put forth by the British colonizers and their missionary sympathizers that the British imperialism brought "civilization" to our country is nothing more than an expression of the British racist justification of the conquest and imposition of white supremacy on our country. What they brought was economic exploitation, political oppression, and cultural genocide. If cities, towns, roads, rail-

ways, ports and power plants were established and constructed it was only so that the raw materials, extracted, could easily be transported, and manufactured good brought in for capitalist profit. The rest of the country languished in utter backwardness and cultural subjugation. Secondly, the schools the imperialists claim to have established were used as instruments to alienate our people from their culture and traditions, precisely to make them submissive slaves. In other words, education as an ideology was a justification and encouragement for colonial enslavement. The whole colonial process was, to say the least, an infliction of pains and sufferings on our people and enjoyment for the British—the development of Britain, the underdevelopment of our country. But a socio-economic system that brings misery, suffering and increasing poverty and cultural oppression to the great majority of humanity is doomed to fail. This is exactly what happened to our country—our people in 1952 had had enough of the imperialist oppression and they began to act accordingly.

Before they decided to take arms against the foreign oppressor, they had tried, as we shall see later, to regain our country's freedom by peaceful means but any attempts they made were received with severe, often bloody repression. After all attempts to achieve national independence peacefully were met with savage repression, they decided to fight fire with fire. They organized an armed resistance, Mau Mau. Clearly, it is understandable that imperialism does not understand dialectics and is based on violence against those it exploits. Therefore, there is no question of whether to use arms against imperialism since it understands nothing but violence. Fidel Castro explains:

Let no one harbor any illusions about [fighting imperialism] by peaceful means in any country; let no one harbor any illusions at all. Anyone trying to tell such a thing to the masses will be completely deceiving them.

He goes on:

Where repression of workers and peasants is fierce, where the domination of imperialism is strongest, the first and most important lesson is to understand that it's neither

just nor correct to divert the people with vain and fanciful illusions that [imperialism] can be uprooted by legal means which do not and will not exist.

Evidently, the Mau Mau leadership was correct when it rejected the constitutional manipulations of British imperialism and took the road of armed struggle. Naturally, when a people are enslaved, colonized and constantly brutalized, oppressed, exploited; their life-possibilities limited, caged, dictated by their oppressor they would rebel and, with courage, lash out to confront the oppressor with arms.



## FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION

On May 12, 1950, thirty-nine Kenyan farm workers were arrested in Naivasha after *nyapara* (overseer) Njihia wa Kintuha reported to his white colonial employer, S.V. Aitchison, that he had been forcefully recruited by them to join a secret organization whose political goal was to drive *Wazungu* (Europeans) out of Kenya by violent means. Specifically, he informed Aitchison that the secret movement was using a traditional oath as a tool of recruitment, unity, and commitment.

The arrested workers were brutally tortured by the colonial police, but they stubbornly refused to reveal the aims and the name of the Movement. Nineteen of them, 15 men and four women, were brought to court and charged with membership in an unlawful society. They were jailed for seven years each. Njihia was the colonial state's key witness. The Magistrate and the prosecutor were both white. The interpreter was an African; a collaborator with the colonial state.

During the trial, Magrougi ole Kodogoya, under cross-examination on the dock, absolutely refused to cooperate with the colonial prosecutor. Repeatedly, he was asked by the prosecutor to explain to the colonial Magistrate, H.A. Carr, how he was recruited into the underground Movement, as well as the aims and the name of the Movement and methods used to make him a member, but he refused to answer the questions put to him directly. Instead, he told the Magistrate that because of his commitment and dedication to the Movement, he would never reveal *maundu mau* (those things) the leadership of the Movement told him not to reveal to the government. He would die first, he stressed, before he betrayed the sacred Movement. The Magistrate angrily insisted that Kodogoya must explain to the court what he meant by "those things" he was told never to reveal. With firmness and fearless courage, Kodogoya told the Kangaroo Magistrate:

*Ndingīkwīra maūndū mau mau nderirwo ndikoige nī kīama. Nī hito iitū. Ningī wee ūrī thū iitū. Nī inyuī mwatūtunyire būrūri na hinya; mūgūtūtua ngoombo cianyu... Būrūri ūyū nī witū, twatigūrwo nī Aagu na Aagu. Tūtikaaūrekia.*

I cannot tell you those, those things I was told not to tell by the Movement. It is our secret. Besides, you are our enemy. You [White people] took our country by force and made us your slaves... This is our country, we inherited it from our ancestors. We shall never abandon it.

The English colonial press, confused by the statement, but seeking the way to characterize the secret organization, seized upon the words “*mau mau*” (those, those) as the name of the Movement. Further, the press explained that the aim of the Movement was to overthrow the British rule in the colony by armed struggle and establish an African government. To be a member of the movement, the press added, one must take a Mau Mau oath.

That is how the name “Mau Mau” entered the political dictionary of Kenya’s anti-imperialist resistance.

The Kenyan people have significantly immortalized the name “Mau Mau” because it symbolizes their collective heroism against foreign domination and their undying love for freedom and liberty. In other words, it has become synonymous with Kenya national patriotism, anti-imperialism, military acumen, and most importantly, popular democratic revolution.

For academic historians in our country, all of these truths are suspect. The first article in the volume you are holding was previously published in a special number of *Kenya Historical Review* to defend Mau Mau against a rain of academic untruths. In it, this author called for further research, reminding readers that, “there are people still alive with useful documentary evidence which is in stark opposition to some current hypotheses.” It was for continuing that line of research that this author was jailed. The second article explains why the dictatorship cannot tolerate the truth about Mau Mau, and shows some parallels between the struggle then and the struggle today. Finally, as an appendix, is the secret British file on Makhan

Singh. It is a reminder about a great patriot of our country and the colonialists' attitude toward him.



## HISTORICAL MATERIALISM AND THE WRITING OF OUR HISTORY

*(This paper was distributed to the Kenyatta University students who were taking my course, "History of Political Ideas," in May 1982 for discussion. We never had the opportunity to discuss it because on June 03, 1982, I was arrested and imprisoned by the Moi-KANU dictatorship.)*

The materialist interpretation of history, commonly known as Historical Materialism, is defined as the scientific application of dialectical materialism to the study of the evolution of human societies. It affirms that, just as there are objective laws of nature, so are there objective laws of history; that consequently a science of history is possible. It holds, however, that such a science is possible provided that:

1. We acknowledge the existence of the objective laws in history;
2. We proceed on the basis that laws can be discovered;
3. We attain the data necessary for the historical understanding of the way these laws operate; and
4. We apply these laws in any given society without subjectivism, ethnicism, chauvinism and schematism, and in so doing we will be able to uncover the *material basis* of the society and its social contradictions.

What is the material basis of society? Karl Marx, in his *Critique of Political Economy*, states: "In the production which men [and women] carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond

to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of the society, the real foundation, on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of consciousness". Having this dialectical understanding will give us an opportunity to see clearly the interconnection between slavery, imperialism, colonialism and the development of capitalism as the world economic force. Similarly, we will be able to understand the economic and cultural roots of underdevelopment in the Third World countries.

World history, for instance, shows that capitalism developed from the feudal system. The feudal period, particularly in Europe, began with the decline of the Roman Empire as a power in Europe. It was emerging around 180 AD and finally matured and institutionalized around 600 AD. The principal class contradictions existed between the landlord and serf. The cultural and socio-economic development of Europe was on the decline, and as a result, this period is generally characterized by the European bourgeois rulers and their intellectual lackeys as the "Dark Ages". The bourgeois analysis of this period, as usual, was based on metaphysics and idealism. They miserably failed to see that what was taking place in Europe during this period was a class struggle between the landlord and bourgeoisie, hence a contradiction between the two productive forces based on feudalism and the new, superior productive forces based on capitalism.

This period, in European history, lasted nearly one thousand years ending around the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The Christian church began to establish its control during this time both ideologically and as a cover of the bourgeois propertied class. It is important to note that the ideology, which the church articulated, reflected the reactionary philosophical tenets of *Manicheanism*. Manicheanism by definition is a bourgeois belief based on racism—that god is *light* and the devil is *dark*, hence a bourgeois justification for the enslavement of the indigenous peoples of Asia, Africa and the Americas.

In the years between the collapse of feudalism and the establishment of modern European states through the framework of the Catholic church and capitalism, the masses of Europe were engaged mainly in the internal class struggle within their own continent. What then were the determining factors for the expansion and technologi-

cal advancement of Europe after the 15<sup>th</sup> Century? We must again apply the science of materialism in the study of society. Dialectically speaking, "changes and development always began with changes and development of the productive forces and, in the first place, with changes and development in the *instruments* of production. First, the productive forces of society change and develop, and then, depending on these changes and in conformity with them, man's relation of production."<sup>1</sup>

With the rise of capitalism as the new mode of production, Europe was able to make certain advances in both technology and science. The new European bourgeois ruling class found a way to expand by borrowing, stealing and perfecting new instruments of production, new weapons and new tactics of war.<sup>2</sup> The corresponding changes in production relations were—a rising merchant bourgeois class who through the use of usury introduced another economic development: credit, banking and exchange system. All of these improvements in the economic structure of Europe led to the advancement of world trade, and the theory of mercantilism.

Mercantilism is a term applied to the economic policy which had its inception in Europe during the decline of feudalism. In fact, it was the process and historical development of capitalism. It is a doctrine, in the extreme sense, made wealth and money identical; but as the years rolled on mercantile economists based the definition of the system on money exclusively. Money was therefore "regarded as the main object of a community. Thus, it was held that community must confine itself to dealing with other nations or communities on such lines as would attract the most precious metals to itself..."<sup>3</sup> Money, therefore, became the soul-item of individual enrichment in a bourgeois society as well as a dominant force of exploitation and oppression in the world. Marx, in his observations of the process of capitalist development, explains: "The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and the looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren from the commercial hunting of black skins, signaled the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production".<sup>4</sup> In connection with that the European bourgeoisie were able to expropriate the land from the serf at the expense of the peoples of the Third World. Western Europe not only became the first capitalist socio-political unit, but with the ability

and power to monopolize capitalism, was able to secure world trade and stifle capitalism from developing elsewhere in the world, except in Japan. In particular, slavery as a process of capitalism disrupted the development of the productive forces of our continent; consequently the decline of African societies — their industries, science and technology. Slavery ravaged and depopulated our continent. It is estimated that at least a hundred million African peasants, between the age of 15 and 35, were traded in slavery. European slave trade had a dual character: for Africa it was the beginning of the history of imperialist destruction and fascist massacre; the period of underdevelopment of Africa; and for western Europe it laid the economic foundation for capitalist growth, development, territorial extension and global domination based on white supremacy.

Thus, the real basis of capitalism is slavery and the continuation of its life as a system of huge profits is imperialism and colonialism and neocolonialism in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Specifically, it is clear to state that slavery, imperialism, and colonialism are dialectically linked to the exploitation and oppression of the masses of Africa by international capital. Equally, the anti-imperialist and class struggle in our country and Africa is a product of capitalist exploitation and oppression. In essence, to study the historical development of capitalism is to understand the dialectics of our people's struggle against the foreign invaders, imperialism and colonialism.

In other words, the only way in which we Kenyans can reach any sound historical and scientific conclusions concerning our people's contemporary struggle in relationship to our present economic and cultural underdevelopment is through uncovering the material basis of our society, hence a scientific analysis of our past and present social set-up and its dialectical relationship to world imperialism and its lackeys. Using this historical and dialectical materialism in the study of our history will enable us to see the interlink between our people's anti-imperialist struggle and the world anti-imperialist struggles of millions and millions of the peoples of Asia, Latin America and the rest of our continent. Equally, it will enable us to see that our struggle against colonialism was a continuation and development of our past and protracted struggle against the foreign invaders.

My argument therefore is that if we do not grasp the theory of class struggle as the key link in the study of our history, it would be

impossible for us to have a clear and scientific understanding of our people's history and their struggle against the forces of exploitation and oppression. Accordingly, we will also fail to see the class contradictions of the present situation in our country as an expression of the various contradictions of our past anti-imperialist struggle as they clearly develop and interact in new historical circumstances.

The ignorance of some Kenyan historians in failing to understand *Historical Materialism*, plus the general failure to apply it in the study of our people's history have led them to become apologists for imperialism and its lackeys in our country. Shamelessly, some of them have become staunch supporters of the imperialist and neo-colonialist forces within and outside the university. I am not saying this for nothing or without good grounds. The Kenyan patriotic war against the foreign invaders, say from 1800-1915, for instance, has been commonly described by some Kenyan historians as a "tribal uprising". For me, I see this patriotic resistance as part of the world struggle against imperialism and the foreign invaders. It was fought by our people, either collectively or separately, in defense of our country against the foreign invaders. It was fought in almost every part of our country, and hundreds of Kenyan patriots lost their lives in their steeled determination to keep our country free and independent.

During my discussion with James Beuttah on the conquest of our country by British imperialism and its lackeys<sup>5</sup>, I happened to mention that our people's resistance against the British invaders in the 1800s has been always described by some Kenyan historians and their foreign friends as a "tribal resistance", and not as a patriotic war against the foreign invaders. Indignantly, Beuttah replied: "Look, anyone who merely dismisses this Kenyan patriotic war against the British invaders as a "tribal war" or "tribal uprising" must be a lackey of imperialism. Our people fought those foreign savage invaders for more than 25 years before they were able to completely occupy our country. The brunt of this war was borne heavily by the peasant masses who in unequal and incomparably heroic struggle carried on the fight with courage and steel-like determination to keep our country free from those savage invaders. Though they were defeated and our country turned into a backyard of British imperialism, they fought with great heroism.

“However”, he continues, “our people’s resistance to the foreign occupiers did not end there, it dialectically took on new forms—especially in the urban centers of our country, where our people were more in contact with the fascist colonialists, suffered from daily racism and economic exploitation more directly, and hence felt the injustice of colonial occupation more severely. This period, say between 1920 and 1945, saw the development of African political organizations such as E.A.A., KTWA, KCA, UMA, THA, and later KAU was formed. We tried to use democratic methods to regain our independence and freedom, but this did not work. In fact, it was misinterpreted by our enemy as a weakness on our part. Eventually, we realized that independence can be won only through armed struggle. It was at this juncture we collectively decided to fight the British colonialists and their running dogs with fire and blood. We formed Mau Mau as an armed liberation movement.”

In essence, what Beauthah is trying to show is simply that the contemporary struggle of our people against imperialism and colonialism and their lackeys, as mentioned earlier, is a continuation and development of their past struggle against the foreign invaders. And it is equally true that any Kenyan historian who fails to see this is blind or is a traitor in the service of imperialism and neocolonialism. I think the correct principle the Kenyan historians should take in the study of our history is to make the past serve the present, hence to strengthen and heighten the anti-imperialist and anti-neocolonialist forces in our country. However, this can only be possible if we apply dialectical materialism in the study of our national history. By applying the theory of historical and dialectical materialism in the study of our history one would scientifically see that the development of the Mau Mau movement was characterized by several factors. (1) the cultural and economic oppression and exploitation among masses of our people which linked with the brutal occupation of the country by British imperialism and its overt and covert policy to make Kenya a whiteman’s country; (2) the acceleration of the anti-imperialist struggle through KCA, EATUC and KAU, hence the rise and development of a powerful anti-colonialist working class force; (3) the defeat of German fascism and its flunkeys and the liberation of Eastern Europe, China and North Korea, and their adoption of a socialist road of economic development; (4) the intensification of the national anti-imperialist struggles in southeast Asia and

the defeat of French imperialism in Vietnam; and (5) the victory of the Indian people over the British occupiers and the decline of British imperialism as the leading world imperialist power and its replacement by US imperialism.

My attempt here is to show that Mau Mau was part of a national and global anti-imperialist struggle; it occurred and developed when the whole world was entering a new era of the proletarian struggle against capitalism, imperialism and colonialism. Therefore, to study the Mau Mau movement in isolation with the deliberate effort to exclude it from the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle, as many western bourgeois historians and their Kenyan academic flunkies have done, is clearly a conscious attempt to demolish, with impunity, Kenya's anti-imperialist struggle and simultaneously to reinforce the anti-Mau Mau, anti-Kenyan scholarship in our schools, colleges and universities.

In order to combat this reactionary, pro-imperialist approach in the study of Kenya's history, our research, should be based on the following: (1) the study of scientific laws and the development of our society; (2) the study of other anti-imperialist struggles and their dialectical relationships to our people's anti-imperialist, anti-colonial resistance; (3) the study of our past anti-imperialist movements and the present concrete conditions with application of scientific analysis and principle, hence dialectical materialism; and (4) the study and the understanding of the materialist theory of class struggle and using it as our principal guideline in our research.

Basically, in a class society like ours, the question: "For whom are you writing?" is fundamental; it is a serious question. A question of principle.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Joseph Stalin, *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, p. 31.
2. Until the 15<sup>th</sup> century the western Europeans lagged behind the more advanced peoples of Africa and Asia in their technology. The Europeans adopted printing, gunpowder and the magnetic compass, which had been invented by the Chinese. From Africa, they learned Egyptian numerals and the improved method of algebra

and geometry. Architecture, Geography and Oceanic science they learned from Carthage.

3. Kwame Nkrumah, *Towards Colonial Freedom*, p.9.
4. Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, Vol. 1. Chapter XXXI.
5. The British were greatly assisted in the conquest of our country by native collaborators such as Karūri wa Gakure, Kīnyanjui, Wang'ombe wa Nderi, Mumia, Lenana, Musa Nyandusi, Wangū wa Makeri, Chief Masaku and many others. These individuals are traitors to, and murderers of the heroic Kenyan patriots and this is what they will be in our history.
6. EAA - East African Association.
7. KCA - Kikuyu Central Association.
8. KTWA - Kavirondo Taxpayers Welfare Association.
9. UMA - Ukamba Members Association.
10. THA - Taita Hills Association.
11. KAU - Kenya African Union.
12. EATUC - East African Trade Union Congress.

## MAU MAU: THE PEAK OF AFRICAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION IN COLONIAL KENYA<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

There is renewed and growing intellectual and political interest in Mau Mau history both here in Kenya and abroad. This is a most important development for us Kenyan historians because I sincerely believe that the true distinction of our profession will depend on how far we succeed, or fail, to bring out clearly and without fear or favor the historical significance of Mau Mau to Kenya's political development up to today and subsequently.

Indeed the timing could not be more opportune. Indications are that interest groups and individuals, including, as we shall see later, some university historians have started *revising* important aspects of Kenya's political history, especially of Mau Mau development. If crucial documentable occurrences of the Mau Mau Movement are ignored, purposely or otherwise, if dubious new information is smuggled into the discussion, then certainly unjustifiable analysis, deductions and conclusions will result. I insist that if our reputation is to remain worth anything or if we wish to play a positive and enlightening role in the future development of Kenya's society we must discard the speculative and encourage the objective. Clearly, a national movement that attracted hundreds of thousands of our people, a movement whose goals and aims were so appropriate to the common desires of so many, a movement which so profoundly influenced Kenya's political evolution and inspired so many fraternal peoples, in short, a movement which was a part of the world-wide anti-colonial onslaught can not be dismissed merely with a flick of a pen.

My aim here is to introduce some important new information to reinforce such already existing, unfortunately underutilized, but excellent, documentation as Karari Njama's *Mau Mau From Within*. I have undertaken some interviewing of surviving cadres of the Mau Mau Movement and introduced hitherto little-known and little-used documents such as *Kimaathi's Papers: Mau Mau Documents*, guerrilla revolutionary songs as well as the works of the former Mau Mau cadres: *The Urban Guerrilla* by Mohamed Mathu, *The Hardcore* by Karigo Müchai, and *The Man in the Middle* by Ngūgī Kabiro.

The Mau Mau Movement used the folk-poetry method of mass communication and in the process produced a most formidable political literature in song-form, thus politicizing in a short time a largely peasant membership condemned by colonialists as illiterate and irredeemably superstitious. Did these songs and other symbols express nationalistic, anti-colonial, Kenyan feelings? Did the Mau Mau guerrilla leadership articulate the feelings of the great majority of the Kenyan people? Essentially these questions form the basis of my argument.

## II

Kenyan people resisted the invasion and occupation of our country by imperialism violently. We can, for convenience, divide the recent Kenyan people's resistance against imperialism into four historical stages.

The first stage began in 1800 to 1900 when the imperialist forces were establishing their colonial settlement and political domination over Kenyans and their country. It was during this period that the Kenyan people across the land began their protracted struggle against the forces of oppression and exploitation. Between 1895 and 1905, for instance, the Kalenjin people put up a strong and bloody resistance against foreign intruders. This resistance, which was heroically led by Koitalel, lasted for ten years before the invading forces contained it. In the southwestern highlands of Kenya the foreign enemy forces had to fight the Gusii people to occupy their land. The people of central Kenya<sup>2</sup> also had to wage a bloody resistance against the British imperialist forces whose aim was to occupy their country. Richard Meinertzhage, who led the imperialist forces against the people of central Kenya, wrote in 1902:

Last night the enemy made two unsuccessful attacks on my camp. The first of these took place about 11 P.M. It was pitch dark and pouring with rain at the time... We lost two killed and several wounded. The second attack took place about 1:30 A.M. It came without warning and from two sides. A shower of arrows and spears accompanied the rush, which put 7 of the men out of action. Our casualties during the night were 4 soldiers and 5 Masai [mercenaries] killed, and 11 soldiers and 14 Masai wounded. Our carriers had one killed and 7 wounded. We found the bodies of 38 enemy outside our defense in the morning. I must own up, I never expected the Wakikuyu [sic] to fight like this.<sup>3</sup>

Similar patterns of Kenyan people's violent resistance against imperialism took place in other parts of our country. Since these resistances were isolated, uncoordinated and weak, the people were defeated. However, they learned some lessons from these failures. Besides the failure to form a united front, they were also using comparatively primitive weapons while the enemy had the best weapons. Consequently they became a subject people.

The second stage was a continuation of the struggle, which began in the 1800's, but this time at a slightly higher level and with more awareness of the manipulations of imperialism and its brutal presence in the country. But in order to break the people's growing resistance the imperialist rulers resorted to fascist acts against Kenyans. They "systematically passed and enforced all sorts of oppressive measures, such as direct statutory compulsion, imposition of hut and poll tax, curtailment of African lands," using the *kipande* system "for controlling movements of African laborers and for locating and identifying them." It was required by the British for all African males to carry this slave-identification with them at all times "and to produce it when demanded by the police." Anyone without a *Kipande* was liable to arrest "and none could employ him if he had no *Kipande* or if he had not been signed off by his previous employer." This was convenient for the forced labor policies.<sup>4</sup>

Historically, the second stage started about 1900 when the Kenyan working class regrouped in the East African Association (EAA) under the leadership of Harry Thuku began the intensifica-

tion of the struggle against colonialism. Thuku's political strategy was to rally the Kenyan masses in a bid to overthrow the dictatorship of the colonialists by means of mass protests, demonstrations, petitions and other non-violent actions. It worked to a certain extent but, not surprisingly, led to violent clashes with the colonial security forces. What Thuku did not realize was that imperialism is in essence violent, and "it lives and grows only through force and use of force increases as the opposition to it grows."<sup>5</sup> The British imperialists considered Thuku's EAA as a great threat to their interests in the country and East Africa as a whole. They banned the EAA and arrested its leaders. Immediately after the EAA leaders were locked in, the Kenyan masses came out in thousands to demand the release of their leaders unconditionally. For twenty-four hours they surrounded the police station (the former Kingsway Police Station) where their leaders were held. The fascist forces, excited and frightened by the show of the people's strength, unity and determination, responded by savagely firing on the unarmed protesters. When the shooting stopped many patriots lay dead on the streets and many others were seriously injured. It was cold-blooded murder. Job Mūcūcū, who was involved in the struggle, gives the following account:

I went to the police lines with Harun Mīkono. We had been there the previous evening, the fifteenth of March, thousands of us, and were determined to get Harry Thuku out.. Mary Njanjirū, a great patriot from Mūrang'a, leapt to her feet, pulled her dress right up over her shoulders and shouted to the men: 'You take my dress and give me your trousers. You [damn] coward men. What are you waiting for? Our leader is in there. Let us get him!' The hundreds of women trilled their '*Ngemi* (Gīkūyū ululation) in approbation and from that moment on, trouble was probably inevitable. Mary and the other patriots pushed on until the colonialist bayonets of the rifles were pricking at their throats, and then the firing started. Mary was one of the first to die. My companion, Harun Mīkono, was badly wounded in the right leg.

On the other side of the lines the European settlers sitting drinking on the verandah of the Norfolk Hotel joined in the shooting and it is said that they were responsible for most of the deaths over there. One of our people employed by the mortuary told us the 56 bodies<sup>6</sup> were brought in, although the government said 21 were killed.<sup>7</sup>

Thuku and his two comrades were exiled, without trial, to Kisimayu.<sup>8</sup> The banning of EAA and the arrest of its leadership were acts of violence against Kenyans "in reply to their demand that their country be restored to them."<sup>9</sup> This clearly demonstrated that Kenya was plagued by a merciless foreign regime whose ideological creed was to maintain repression and exploitation by force of arms. It also demonstrated to many that nonviolence as a form of struggle was inapplicable to the social reality of the country then. It taught them the violent nature of imperialism and its agents, and at the same time it heightened their fighting consciousness and their determination to resist further, a fact demonstrated by the subsequent stages of struggle.

The third stage began in the late twenties and continued to the early fifties. The Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) replaced EAA as the organized political force. It was organized by a then-relatively radical group of men: Joseph Kang'ethe, Jesse Kariuki, James Beattah and a few others who possessed some skills of mass organization, men who took their political work seriously. Unlike Thuku's loose leadership, the KCA was centralized and well disciplined. Such traditional, albeit weak, forms of group discipline as oath pledges were employed.

However, learning from past experience the KCA leadership worked hard during the interwar period to build its organization and to strengthen the bond between its regular membership and the masses in the countryside including the working class in Nairobi, Mombasa and Nakuru. It is important to point out that the Kenyan nationalism as expressed through KCA was not insular, that there was general widening of political consciousness among all Kenyan masses. This linked, at least in purpose, the leadership of the KCA with similar political associations across the land. The Kavirondo Taxpayers Welfare Association, the Ukamba Members Association, and the Taita Hills Association, were objectively allies as they were all fight-

ing the force of colonialism. Therefore there emerged a loose fraternity, not quite a united front though, against British colonialism. At the same time the KCA leadership was working closely with the leadership of the Kenya trade union movement and the international Pan-African Movement of which W.E.B. DuBois was the leader. Its international connections were of great propaganda value. The subsequent international support of the struggle was an advantage to the movement. Significantly, the struggle against imperialism in our country had developed into a national struggle and had made a great impact in the world by the early thirties.

With its relative political radicalism, its national and patriotic outlook, its relations with the then-militant international Pan-African Movement and other Third World national movements, KCA helped to broaden the national base of the movement in Kenya and abroad. Most significantly for us today is that it heightened the national consciousness of Kenyans during the inter-war period. It aroused great hatred among the colonialists for mobilizing popular opposition. The association was suppressed in 1940 as "communist subversive" following its militant agitation against:

- the alienation of land in Kenya
- the *Kipande* system
- the Hut and Poll tax
- exploitation of African working class
- banning of many respected traditions considered "savage" by colonialists.

Again as with EAA, KCA's leadership was detained and the organization driven underground. *Mūigwithania*, KCA's official organ, was suppressed. Unlike the EAA, KCA continued secret mobilization, particularly in Nairobi, Mombasa, among squatters of the Rift Valley and central Kenya, but under serious difficulties. Although KCA was able to achieve numerous isolated successes underground, it never regained its former position in the national political arena. It was finally incorporated into the Kenya African Union (KAU) under Jomo Kenyatta's leadership. Interestingly, the KCA members refused incorporation into KAU under Harry Thuku's and J. Gĩcūrū's leadership until Jomo Kenyatta took over in 1946. James Beauthah tells us:

the leaders of the new party tried hard to get the well known KCA people to join them, but they would have none of it. Our suspicions were that KAU was a colonial government front and those in leadership were colonial stooges. It was Jomo Kenyatta who convinced most of the KCA members that KAU was a genuine African political party whose aim was to unite all Kenyans and to fight for national independence.<sup>10</sup>

The formation of KAU as a national front against colonialism was characterized by increasing mass resistance and expression against British imperialism. To a large extent, the leadership of KAU was petty-bourgeois nationalist in its conceptions of the politics and socio-economics of a Kenyan society to come. As far as the political system was outlined, its horizon was constitutionalist, reformist at best and parliamentary. It was against revolutionary violence and in favor of negotiations. We therefore see for the first time the dominance of the educated strata in Kenya's political leadership and their conservative stance.

Because of their narrow nationalism, the KAU leaders failed, from the beginning, to understand that without politically directed violence it was impossible to wage a victorious struggle against imperialism and its colonial agents in our country. Again while the leadership was superficially anti-imperialist, it did not, at any time in its existence, have a clear-cut and consistent conception of what was to replace the colonial society. Indeed, a revolutionary organization involved in a national liberation struggle must be ideologically clear, have a seriously worked-out program and a coherent sense of direction. This KAU clearly did not have. As a result the KAU political program was phrased in a vague, abstract and populist way. The main political slogans were "*We want our land back*," "*We want to rule ourselves*," "*Remove the color bar*," etc., but these were merely political slogans of protest; they were not revolutionary in the sense that they gave some indication of an alternative, a new point of departure, some preparedness for self-defense and political mass education, a new kind of direction. Besides Kenyatta exciting the masses with such appeals as:

The freedom tree can only grow when you pour blood on it... I shall firmly hold the lion's jaws so that it will not bite you. Will you bear its claws?

the KAU leadership had not thought of, and was not ready for, a violent confrontation with the colonialist forces. Consequently, when the Kenyan people decided to confront the colonialists with revolutionary violence, this KAU leadership was nowhere to be seen. This point is well expressed by Mohamed Mathu. He writes:

...the minds of the [Kenyan] people were turned toward violence and revolt by the preachings and political agitation of men such as Kenyatta, Koinange and other KAU leaders. The question we now ask is: Why did these men abandon us in our hour of greatest need?<sup>11</sup>

It is also a well-known fact that the “KAU leaders gained knowledge of the Emergency Declaration” and their impending arrest a day “before October 20, 1952, announcement”<sup>12</sup> and yet none of them tried to escape and join Dedan Kīmaathi and other patriots in the forests. All of them allowed themselves to be arrested without any struggle at all. Kaggia explains:

on the 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1952,.... Our informer sent for me...  
He told me that the colonial government planned to arrest  
all KAU leaders during the next 36 hours....<sup>13</sup>

In essence, KAU’s aim was to achieve some national independence through constitutional and peaceful means. From 1947 to 1952 the leadership made several attempts to reach a compromise or understanding with the British, but each of these attempts was met with increasing resistance and hostility from the imperialist circles. All attempts failed miserably. These failures were to affect KAU in the future. The more militant within the Union would insist that the KAU leadership take a hard line against British imperialism.

These disillusioned militants were soon to find allies. In Nairobi where the life of the workers was “characterized by chronic unemployment [and] hopeless housing conditions,” and inevitable police harassment and brutality, “there grew an enormous number of people

who were extremely dissatisfied”<sup>14</sup> with the oppressive conditions. They gradually decided to do something about these unbearable conditions. They began to organize themselves into an anti-colonial group, the Forty Youth Movement (FYM), commonly known as *Aanake a Boote*. Fred Kubai, Charles Wambaa, Enoch Mwangi, Eliud Mūtonyi, Isaac Gathanju, Stanley Mathenge, Domenico Gatū and many others. Since most of them were dissatisfied with the conservative stand KAU continued to advocate, the majority decided to join the Kenya trade union movement which by this period of the country’s history was the most progressive, anti-imperialist force under Makhan Singh’s leadership.<sup>15</sup> Kaggia confirms:

In the trade union movement I found the right place for my ambitions. The people I worked with were as militant and revolutionary as I was. They were not suffering from any inferiority complex. We had little respect for KAU, which we regarded as an instrument of the Governor through Mathu, his nominated member of Legislative Council.<sup>16</sup>

In June 1951 this group of militants took over the KAU leadership in Nairobi branch. As Nairobi was KAU’s most important base because of its large working class, this change was significant. Again Kaggia explains:

The KAU Nairobi branch election was approaching and the trade union leaders met long in advance and planned to capture all posts. We would put strong men in all the important posts and leave room for only one or two non-trade unionists... The final results were: F. Kubai, Chairman (Transport and Allied Workers Union), J. Mūngai, [who later became a colonial undercover police within the Mau Mau movement], Vice-Chairman (Transport and Allied workers Union) B.M. Kaggia, general secretary (Clerks and Commercial Workers Union) The three of us were staunch trade unionists and very militant:

and:

Before the trade unionists took over the leadership of Nairobi branch, KAU was very unpopular. All of the Nairobi people looked to the trade unions to represent them. Even Kenyatta did not seem to have any faith in KAU. He didn't come to KAU headquarters. Everything was left in the hands of vice-president Mbotela. Kenyatta concentrated on the Kenya Teachers College at Githunguri.<sup>17</sup>

By August 1951 it was clear that the moderate and conservative forces in the Union were very weak. The militants were gaining strength in other branches also.<sup>18</sup> Under these circumstances, Kenyatta was left with one choice: to break the Union by expelling the militants or to side with them against his own political stand and that of the British. He took an apparently neutral line, a middle-of-the-road policy between the KAU conservatives and the militants. He was afraid to oppose the militants, as he clearly understood the danger involved. For instance, way back in 1948, he told an American journalist, Negley Farson: "I am afraid of this left-wing group. I believe that their dark and half-educated minds will lead them to use force."<sup>19</sup>

Between August 1951 and October 1952 it was evident that the Kenyan masses were getting impatient with old-style KAU politics. Meanwhile, Kenyatta and Mbiyū wa Koinange made an unsuccessful attempt "to ensure a peaceful transition to African self-government by opening a fresh dialogue"<sup>20</sup> with the British colonialists in London and the settler interests in Kenya. Mbiyū and Achieng' Oneko were sent to London to explain KAU's policy to the Colonial Office. The Colonial office ignored them and refused to see them. In fact, the Colonial Secretary abusively dismissed them as "irresponsible black monkeys." Kaggia writes:

The KAU militants who were at the center of the Mau Mau introduced a resolution which was passed at the KAU Kaloleni meeting on the day when Mbiyū wa Koinange and Achieng' Oneko were leaving for Britain... The resolution declared this deputation would be the last one sent

to Britain. We had no faith in deputations, but we were willing to give Britain a last chance... Some of us believed that there would be no favorable result from the deputation....

Our expectations were fulfilled when Achieng Oneko returned from Britain and said the British Colonial Secretary did not meet them.... Achieng also proved a very good representative for our cause when he described the treatment the deputation received from the Colonial Secretary. All his emphasis on the insulting attitude of the British towards Africans helped our committee convince the people that deputations to London were useless....<sup>21</sup>

On the home front, through the Kenya Citizens' Association,<sup>22</sup> Kenyatta tried to sell KAU's policy to the Kenya settlers but they too rejected it.

After these failures to convince British imperialism that a peaceful transition to African self-government would head off the mounting confrontation, the KAU militants and other patriots openly began to advocate a violent uprising against the British, independent of the regular KAU approach. Kaggia explains: The collecting of guns was accelerated and our intelligence network strengthened. The Mau Mau Central Committee authorized more and more aggressive methods and activities."<sup>23</sup> The militants consolidated their hold among the working class in Nairobi and the squatters of the Rift Valley. To a great extent they had the support of the great majority of peasant masses in central Kenya. It was clear by now that Kenyatta had little control of the situation and he knew very little of what was going on in secrecy. Again, Kaggia writes:

The Mau Mau Central Committee asked Kenyatta to see them. For the first time Kenyatta met the Mau Mau Central Committee. He was surprised to see Kubai and myself there. And he noticed to his further surprise that the other leaders, whom he did not know, were running the meeting. E. Mütonyi and I. Gathanju were the chairman and secretary...

Mau Mau was an organization formed by KAU militants who had lost faith in constitutional methods of fight-

ing for independence... It was clear [to us] that the colonial government would never give in Kenya without a struggle....<sup>24</sup>

Since KAU had failed to bring national independence through constitutional methods, the more politically aware saw no other alternatives but to impose their will through armed struggle. Obviously the situation now called for a new leadership and a new kind of organization to direct the people's movement. This, therefore, led to the organization of the Mau Mau movement. As Philip Bolsover writes:

If Mau Mau and other secret societies exist, they are the direct result of land robbery by white settlers, suppression of trade unions and democratic rights, and the use of violence by the British Government against the African People.<sup>25</sup>

The organization of the Mau Mau Movement marked the fourth and still higher stage of our people's struggle. In fact, for most Kenyan people, particularly those in central Kenya, Mau Mau was "food and drink for a hungry and thirsty traveler." In other words, Mau Mau was their tongue, their voice, ears, brain and blood in their hearts and veins. The Movement pointed out clearly to the Kenyan patriots the road of the armed struggle, stirring up a vigorous nationalist political upsurge throughout the country in which the workers and peasants became an independent leading political force. In essence, this historic event marked a fundamental turning point in the history of the Kenyan anti-imperialist resistance.

In an attempt to halt the revolutionary upsurge of our people, the British occupiers began with the banning of KAU, arresting its leaders (Bildad Kaggia, Jomo Kenyatta, Fred Kubai, Kūng'ū wa Karūmba, Achieng Oneko, Paul Ngei, etc), suppressing its political activities and destroying its bases both in urban centers as well as in the countryside. The limited bourgeois freedoms of speech, press, association, movement and assembly were thrown overboard. "The only answer to Mau Mau," insisted colonel Grogan, the leader of the white supremacist force, "is to teach the whole Kikuyu tribe a lesson by providing a psychic shock."<sup>26</sup> The Mau Mau patriotic army accepted this challenge unflagging and would have courageously

replied: "We have to be violent in a violent situation, we must fight when a war is imposed on us, defend our rights in the face of aggression. There can be no peace when the foundations of peace have been unilaterally undermined."<sup>27</sup>

The arrest of Kenyatta and other KAU leaders was undertaken with the misguided notion that they were the main organizers of the Mau Mau Movement. Their removal, the imperialists believed, would smash Mau Mau at the embryonic stage. To their great disappointment and surprise most Kenyans held on firmly and continued with the resistance. Blinded by racism and with typical colonial arrogance, the British did not recognize the crucial distinction that Mau Mau was a *separate, independent force* with its own direction and aims under the guerrilla army in the forests. Kaggia writes:

Although many Mau Mau members were KAU members others were not. And many KAU members were not members of Mau Mau. More important, some of our leaders knew nothing about this militant movement within KAU. KAU took orders from its Central Committee; Mau Mau had a separate Central Committee. There was no organized link between the two.<sup>28</sup>

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MAU MAU INSURRECTION

As mentioned earlier, the Kenya Africa Union (KAU) was formed in 1944 as a national front against British occupation. Its ultimate goal was a government of the majority—non-racial, democratic government. Effectively the KAU leaders organized and mobilized the Kenyan masses in pursuance of this fundamental aim. In the process, the KAU leadership was able, between 1946 and 1950, to heighten national anti-imperialist consciousness for the great majority of the oppressed Kenyans through its political education and mass mobilization; yet the immediate material objective was never to overthrow the British occupiers by armed resistance, but rather to use the constitutional methods of struggle to achieve majority rule. While these methods of political struggle were necessary, and somehow succeeded in India, Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, etc., they may possibly not be effective in Kenya where white supremacy had

been consolidated and reinforced with armed imperialist forces. The KAU petty-bourgeois nationalists failed to grasp this basic reality. They failed to comprehend that imperialism is a monstrous force and must be fought and resisted violently. Marxism-Leninism teaches that in order to liberate their country, the oppressed must wage a resolute struggle against their oppressors, and that armed combat is the decisive form of that struggle. Similarly, Mao Tse-Tung and Fidel Castro strongly argue that political power must come from the barrel of a gun, from an organized armed struggle.

This political narrowness and ideological liberalism of the KAU leadership sharpened the contradictions within the nationalist, anti-imperialist movement. The radical and progressive forces led by Fred Kubai, Bildad Kaggia, Eliud Mūtonyi, Isaac Maina and the Forty Youth Movement rejected what they termed "KAU conservatism" and secretly formed a revolutionary clandestine movement, Mau Mau, in 1951.

The movement was initially organized from Nairobi, which was the headquarters of its Central Committee (CC) and the main base of its revolutionary activities. The Central Committee was composed of twelve men. It was the supreme organ of the movement and was mainly responsible for the overall policy of the armed resistance. Through the Group of Thirty Organization (National Congress), district, divisional, locational and sub-locational central committees, the CC mobilized and gave political education to hundreds of Kenyans, especially workers, petty-bourgeoisie and peasantry in central Kenya, the Rift Valley region and the urban centers. In the process, it effectively sharpened the contradictions between our people and the British imperialist occupiers with their Kenyan allies. It also exposed and weakened the liberal-conservative stance of the KAU petty-bourgeois leadership led by Jomo Kenyatta.

The armed wing of the Movement, the Kenya Land Freedom Army (KLFA), was under the command of General Mathenge wa Mirūgī. His deputy was General Enoch Mwangi. During this early period its primary duties included: (1) to help the Central Committee in politicizing and educating the oppressed masses in order to deepen their anti-imperialist nationalism; (2) to eliminate the internal and external enemies of the Movement and to organize intelligence agents to infiltrate the colonial machinery; (3) to recruit Kenyan

youth into the resistance Movement, particularly to persuade them to join the Mau Mau armed forces; (4) to collect funds from cadres and general membership. It also organized a KLFA special unit whose task was to fund the clandestine revolutionary movement through robbing the colonial financial institutions and foreign and domestic capitalist businesses; and (5) to give military training and ideological education to the Mau Mau leadership and its leading cadres.

### **ANTI-IMPERIALIST OATH AND RECRUITMENT**

Any Kenyan, regardless of his nationality or origin, could become a Mau Mau member if he had accepted its program of action, rules and regulations, paid his monthly membership due, and took the anti-imperialist oath. From the beginning the Mau Mau leadership used the anti-imperialist oath as a recruitment tool. The oath served, not only as a political instrument against the enemy, but also as an effective tool for strengthening and reinforcing discipline, commitment, security and secrecy in the underground Movement. Further, it was used as psychological weapon in erasing fear of imperialism in cadres, and in deepening their patriotic consciousness. Thus, the oath pledge was clear and direct. In part a new recruit was required, under oath, to pledge:

*I will never reveal the secrets of this organization or anything else concerning this organization to the colonial authorities or to any person who is not himself/herself a member. I will obey without question all the rules and regulations of this Movement, and should I ever transgress against them, I will surrender my life to the Movement.*

Thirdly, the oath was utilized as an effective tool of ensuring obedience, loyalty, truthfulness and devotion to the clandestine Movement, and as a revolutionary pledge to uphold national patriotism regardless of the consequences:

*I swear in the name of our country, the name of this Movement, that I shall work with all my power for the total liberation of Kenya from British imperialism, sacrificing*

*for this even my own and my family's lives. I shall never, come what may, reveal the names of this organization, or that of the leader of my unit, even if I am caught, tortured or killed. I shall always be loyal and truthful to the leader of my unit. I shall perform any task which is assigned to me no matter how difficult it would be. If I betray this vow, this pledge, this commitment, I shall deserve every punishment meted out to me as a traitor.*

Such an anti-imperialist oath, administered in the name of the country and people, was an expression of true patriotism. To make sure of its effectiveness, the punishment for breaking the oath pledge was death and was accomplished from the direct orders of the Central Committee.

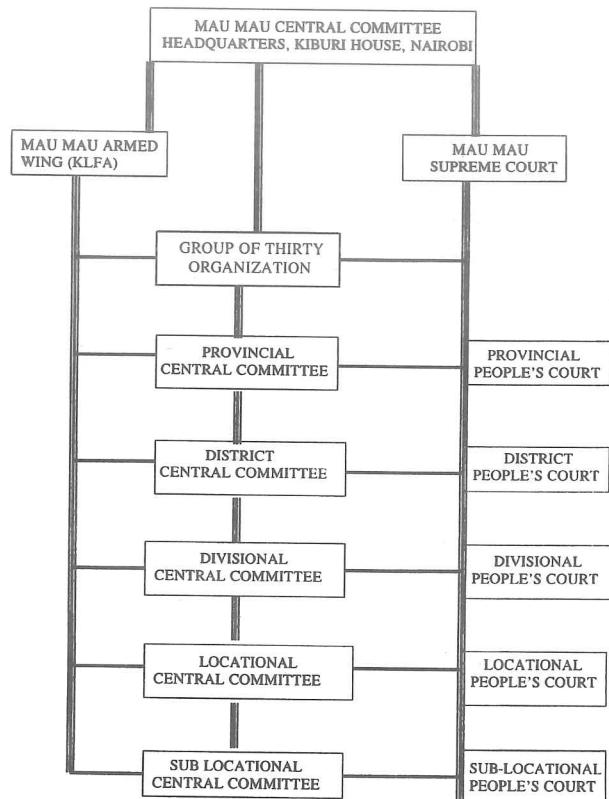


Figure No. 1: Mau Mau Political Structure 1950–October 1952.

## THE POLITICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE CADRES

As a clandestine, revolutionary movement, Mau Mau subjected its cadres to rigorous discipline, self-sacrifice and self-denial. Every cadre was required to fully participate in all the movement's activities, obey all its rules and regulations, and carry out its decisions undaunted and without compromise. In terms of financial support, cadres were required to surrender all their wealth to the Movement without hesitation. The oath pledge states:

*I swear before Ngai (God) and the compatriots present here today that all my wealth: land, livestock, bank account, including my own life, belong to this organization. From now on I belong to this organization, and I will offer all my energy including my life in order to further the cause of this organization. If I violate this vow, may I be killed.*

## THE KENYA WAR COUNCIL

Between 1951 and 1952, the colonial repression was accelerated. Many innocent Kenyans were arrested and jailed with or without trial; others were grisly tortured and then killed. In June 1952, the Central Committee held an emergency, secret meeting to plan their strategy. They knew, through their agents in the government, that the colonial regime was planning a major offensive against the independence movement. Firstly, the Central Committee ordered General Mathenge and his force, about 300 strong, to enter Nyandarwa forest to start armed resistance. Enoch Mwangi was made the Chief Commander of the KLFA forces in Nairobi, and Warūhiū wa Itote was temporary appointed the commander in-chief of Kīrīnyaga KLFA Front.

Secondly, the Central Committee was transformed into the Kenya War Council (KWC) and moved its headquarters from Kiburi House to Mathare Valley, the citadel of the working class. The Group of Thirty Organization (GTO) was reorganized and strengthened under a new vigorous leadership of Gīcohi wa Gīthuga. It changed its name to the Provincial Central Committee (PCC). Its central task

was to coordinate Mau Mau war economy in Provinces, to work closely with the KWC and the KLFA forces in the urban and rural areas.

Within the KWC, a new body, the People's Supreme Court (PSC) was formed which consisted of three political leaders and three military leaders to deal with legal matters and, above all, to draft legal guidelines for the Movement. A part from the KWC, the (PSC) was the second powerful organ in the Movement. Under the PSC leadership, the district, divisional, locational and sub-locational people's courts were constructed to deal with the base level legal matters and organizational discipline.

### THE CONSOLIDATION OF ARMED RESISTANCE

The consolidation of the Kenyan anti-imperialist forces in the Mau Mau was a landmark in the history of our country. It showed, for the first time in our history, that a united front of all the democratic, anti-colonial organizations and revolutionary forces could be brought under a worker, peasant and petty-bourgeois leadership. This development was conditioned by the following two main forces: (1) it became imperative to guide the growing militancy of the workers onto a revolutionary path and prevent the dismantlement of the national independence movement by imperialism and its Kenyan running dogs. The leading cadres from workers and the progressive petty-bourgeois groups (organized with democratic and cultural associations, trade unions, KAU and FYM which were loosely and singly attached to an underground movement) were demanding a clarity of line and action; and (2) the developing peasant cell networks were getting impatient for action and the broad masses showed their willingness and readiness to be organized under one leadership with a clear nationalist direction and stance. The armed movement, therefore, advanced and developed in stages.

### THE THREE HISTORICAL STAGES

Kenya's armed resistance against foreign domination advanced in three historical stages: (1) September 1950-October 1952; (2) October 1952-April 1954; and (3) May 1954-December 1963. These stages basically developed in dialectical relation to the stages of intensive

aggression organized, as mentioned earlier, by the enemy forces in an attempt to destroy the revolutionary organization and raze the base structures. The stages are marked by two important developments from the Mau Mau nuclei of armed forces: (1) the development of the Mau Mau economy; (2) the development of the armed forces; (3) and the creation of the Mau Mau judicial system. As the struggle advanced, the economy expanded through five major ways: (a) coordination of membership dues and creation of financial institutions within the movement; (b) procurement of material and funds from the enemy; (c) development of production (both food and material); (d) taxation (people in liberated and semi-liberated areas paid taxes to the Mau Mau); and (e) development of trade between the liberated and semi-liberated and enemy controlled areas.

The development of the armed forces depended on the growth of the economy and in turn depended on the armed forces for the protection and security in order to liberate territories and people under imperialist control. Thirdly, the establishment of the Mau Mau judicial system was aimed at creating a democratic society in the liberated and semi-liberated territories and combating anarchism, terrorism and indiscipline in the armed forces and in production line.

Thus, when war was declared on British occupation, and as soon as a military nucleus was established both in the urban and rural areas, the Mau Mau organization instructed its district, divisional, locational and sub-locational central committees to create areas of security and start production. The first military establishments were, as mentioned earlier, in areas inaccessible to the enemy in the Nyandarwa and Kīrīnyaga forests. As soon as the areas were secured and settled, production began and the struggle advanced. Later as production developed, the armed forces and judicial system also expanded and three types of territories were distinguished for KLFA operatives. Among these were (1) liberated territories; (2) semi-liberated territories; and (3) enemy controlled territories.

In Nairobi, KLFA forces under General Enoch Mwangi, which numbered about 3,000 strong by 1954, was divided into small guerrilla columns in order to carry out swift and vicious attacks against the British enemy and his Kenyan allies, and then disappear among the people. The mass base of the guerrilla army in Nairobi was

largely workers and patriotic petty-bourgeoisie who dauntlessly supplied it with new recruits, food, shelters, medicine and strategic information and ideas. It drew much of its strength and energy, however, from a tightly knit, well-disciplined cadres based in liberated territories, semi-liberated territories and enemy controlled territories. Significantly, in the urban centers, the guerrillas were the fish and the masses were the water.

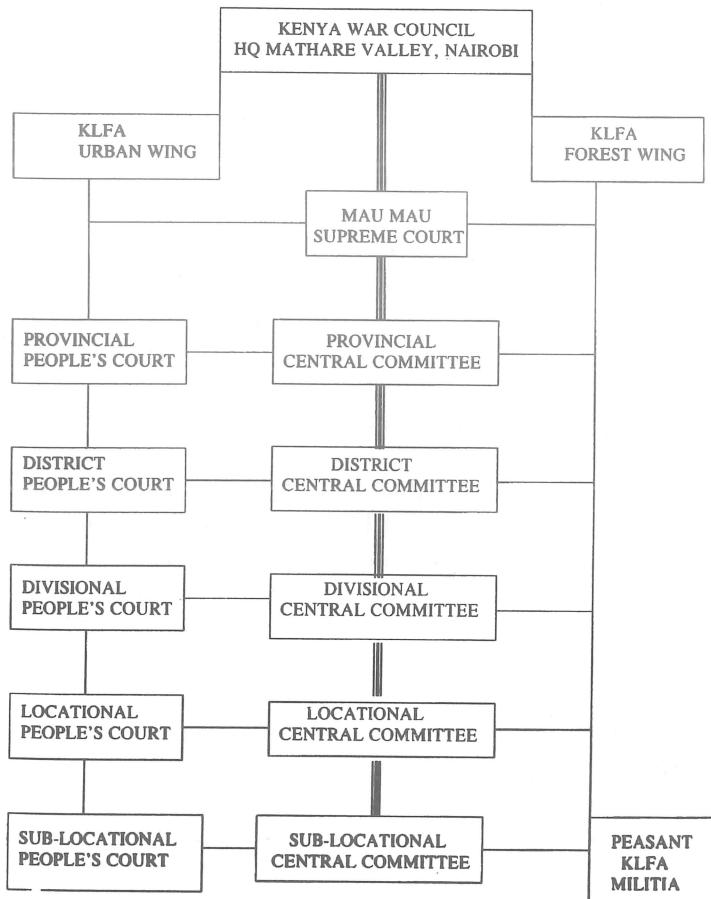


FIGURE NO. 2: Mau Mau Political and Military Structure, October 1952-April 1954.

The struggle in each territory in the urban and rural areas was characterized by the particularity of its natural and cultural environment and past militant history of the workers and peasantry in that territory. The particularity of the struggle also developed in dialectical relation to the particularity of the tactics that the foreign enemy used in that area to defeat the people. The tactics that the people used developed in contradiction to the tactics that the enemy used. The struggle also created a study in the theory and practice of guerrilla warfare. In totality, it was the particularities in the many different struggles that united the Mau Mau Movement as one struggle against the common enemy. In the semi-liberated and enemy controlled territories there was a three-zone guerrilla tactic that KLFA used to operate within. These included: (1) the inner zone; (2) the middle zone; and (3) the outer zone. In these zones, the Movement organized an elaborate system of agents whose primary task was to infiltrate the colonial war machinery in order to obtain weapons and strategic information, and to monitor the movements of the enemy troops.



Dedan Kimathi, pictured here addressing the KLFA historic conference which was held near the banks of Mwathe stream in Nyandarwa forest in August 1953. The conference was attended by more than 5,000 delegates - guerrillas and peasants. The main task of the Mwathe Conference was to draft the tactics and strategy of the armed struggle and to choose the KLFA leadership. Kimathi was appointed the KLFA overall commander and given a military title of Field Marshall. He was also elected the leader and spokesman of the entire Mau Mau Movement.

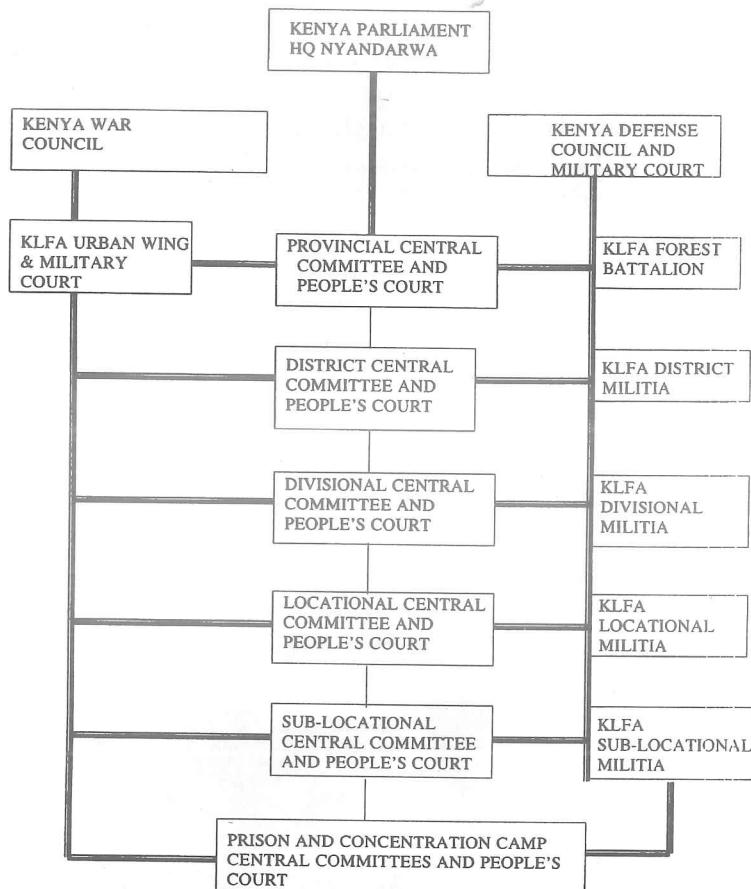


Figure No. 3. Mau Mau Political and Military Structure, April 1954-October 1956.

### THE KLFA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The armed movement operated at three basic structural levels: (1) the base structures; (2) the middle level structures; and (3) the leadership level structure. These basic structural levels remained constant during the thirteen years of struggle. The changes happened only at sub-structural levels reflecting the particularity of each sub-structural levels struggle at specific time and place, and its unique social history and culture. Thus, for example, the difference in the particularity of struggles in Nairobi, Narok and Mürang'a. The dialectical changing and developing sub-structural levels of the Mau

Mau organization reflected secondary contradictions within the movement, and in that it united and advanced against the principal contradiction which was British imperialism. This was the dialectics of the organization: unity-contradiction-unity-advance. It was this that created the stability in its mobility and kept constant the three basic organizational structure levels. This reflects that throughout the struggle the principal contradiction remained constant, the core KLFA anti-imperialist line did not change or waver.

**The Base Level Structure:** This level was the broad worker-peasant base support organized in a cell-network at three levels: (1) sub-locational; (2) locational; and (3) divisional. Each level was represented at the level's Central Committee, i.e., sub-locational central committee, locational central committee and divisional central committee. The representation came through an artery network of the sub-committees of the central committees, which projected branches that reached into group cells of the worker-peasantry. The Base level, rooted in the patriotic history and national cultures of Kenya, was the intelligence, consciousness, muscle and material of the armed organization.

**The Middle Level Structure:** This was the level above the three sub-levels of the Base Level Structure and it was called the Mau Mau District Central Committee. It was the second level in the organizational hierarchy and formed the ideological key link between the Base Level and the Provincial Level Structure. Its sub-structural levels were made of select committee representatives from the divisional central committees, which were in turn representatives from the locational and sub-locational levels of the base level structure. The Mau Mau District Central Committee members were also members of cell-groups in their own home or work places. The vertical and horizontal cross structure of the organization bound it into a tight fabric.

**The Leadership Level Structure:** The leadership structure was at four levels: (1) the Kenya War Council; (2) the Supreme People's Court; and (3) the Provincial Central Committee. At the third level were two sub-structures: (a) the democratic assembly which repre-

sented the broad masses through representatives from the district to sub-locational levels. These representatives also acted as functionaries to the general leadership; and (b) the armed forces. The two sub-structures developed sub-levels as the administrative and military hierarchies. These were dialectically interconnected at many levels of the armed movement and worked collectively as a revolutionary force. The leaders of these sub-structures then formed the top level of the total Mau Mau organizational structure.

### Armed Forces Operation Patterns

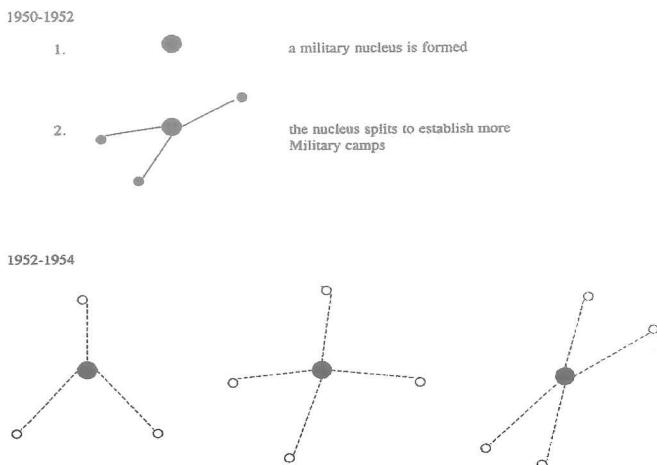


Figure No. 4: Development of Base Armies at first isolated. There is growth of auxiliary armies in semi-liberated areas.

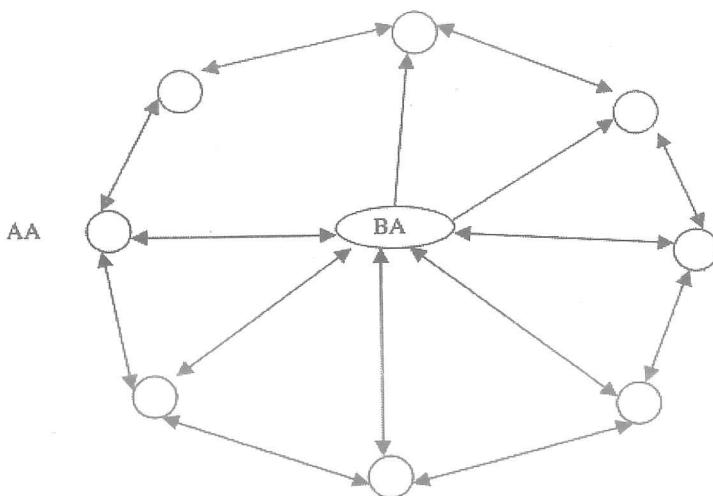


Figure No. 5: Base Armies and Auxiliary Armies Linkage

1. B.A. - Stationed in liberated areas
2. A.A. - Mobile Movement in and out of liberated areas.

### THE NYANDARWA HEADQUARTERS

The headquarters of the KLFA were actually a number of main base areas along upper edge of the bamboo forest. The sub-bases linking the main base areas were constructed into the forest proper according to regiments under different frontline commanders. The moorlands between the Sattima and Kinangop peaks divided the northern and southern bases. Large night gatherings of guerrillas took place on these moorlands to discuss the war efforts and the political future of our country.

The deep valleys of the Gura, Amboi, Kaayahwe, Chaania, Maraagwa, Mathioya Magatua Ciüma and Mathioya Maiïyo rivers were the main hospital and storage areas, where the patients and supplies were kept safe in caves of the valley escarpments. These valleys were made inaccessible to foreigner by blockage and traps, and they were guarded from higher levels. An efficient courier communication system linked all the bases, hospital and supply areas. Thus, when the enemy attacked the entire population on Nyandarwa

was quickly alerted and sections were moved to safety whenever it became necessary.

## SUPPLY GUERRILLA ROUTES

Supply routes fed the material needs of the base and auxiliary armies. They were thus organized as two routes: (1) the main route which led either into the Nyandarwa or Kīrīnyaga headquarters—where the base armies were stationed; and (2) locational routes which criss-crossed and changed directions following the movements of the auxiliary armies, which were always on the march. Outside the liberated area, the main route had many subsidiary routes which entered the Nyandarwa and Kīrīnyaga forests at different points. Once inside the liberated areas all the routes merged into one, which was the thoroughfare into the headquarters. After taking the inventory at the Headquarters, the supplies dispersed through branch routes leading to storage camps.

The routes were directly under the Central Committees at different levels and they connected the strongest cell groups in each location, which organized the transit of supplies according to the type of goods (e.g. ammunition, medicine, food, etc.) and the security of the location. Specifically, the route organization was based on two methods: (1) Depository and Collection; and (2) Relay-run. Depository and Collection was where one group deposited the supplies and collected by another. The groups did not come into contact with each other at all. It was strictly prohibited for security reasons. Relay-run was where the supplies were delivered hand-to-hand and were always on the move. The two methods were then sub-divided as: (a) day time route; and (b) night time route.

In the urban centers, it was the workers' Mau Mau Central Committees which handled and manned the routes, and in the rural areas it was the Peasants' Mau Mau Central Committees. As the major part of the supplies was constantly on the move from the urban centers to the rural areas, the women's Mau Mau Committees thus became the bloodline of the guerrilla army. The women's cells in different locations made the core behind a larger supplies transportation organization and in production front. The cells worked under the sub-locational or locational central committees, and at times they incorporated help from male elders, school children and

patriotic teachers. Sometimes during emergencies alternative routes were devised. These were mostly through Mau Mau cadres in the enemy uniform, strategically assigned to transport supplies from one place to another and these followed through the heart of the enemy military establishments. From the inception of the war, the KWC had successfully organized, as mentioned elsewhere, an elaborate system of secret commandos whose assignments were to infiltrate the colonial machinery and the enemy political and cultural organizations to gather strategic information and to obtain firearms. Other cadres were employed in government hospitals and medical centers and they supplied the guerrilla army with medicine and medical experts.

### **THE KLFA EXPEDITIONS**

The KLFA depended on the workers' and peasants' organizations when they were on a march outside the liberated areas to confront the enemy forces. The workers and peasants made all investigations on the movements and strength of the enemy before a battle was planned. The cell organized information, food and other needed supplies. It is significant to note here that the KLFA front commanders in the rural areas, relied heavily upon the courage, discipline and organizational skills of the women cadres for the general success and security of the battle expeditions. They contacted central committee members at different levels and the women militia members when planning battle strategies. Guerrilla army moved from location to location after the KLFA front commander had conferred with the locational central committee leaders. Each locational central committee controlled the safety, security and welfare of the patriotic force as long as it was in their location.

Generally, an expedition of the guerrilla army moved in four formations: (1) the scouts; (2) the First Rank Unit; (3) the Middle Rank Unit; (4) the Rear Rank Unit; The scouts were a small group of about four to six guerrillas who moved about two to three miles ahead of the main force disguised as local peasants. They made connections with locational or sub-locational central committee members and checked on code systems, general security and supplies. They coordinated their findings with the leader of the First Rank Unit.

The First Rank Unit was composed of a seasoned army unit about fifteen armed guerrillas who were also good war tacticians. They would march ahead between the main force and the scouts — and took positions as the guerrilla army entered the village to punish the *hūmungaati* traitors or to pick up supplies. Specifically, they were the security unit in the force. The Middle Rank Unit carried the main rank and file of the army and was usually led by the second in command. They carried most of the arms, ammunition and other supplies. As firearms were in short supply, they were highly valued. The organization of this rank depended on the number and types of weapons. Usually the guerrillas carrying rifles and machine guns marched ahead followed by a section carrying shotguns and pistols. The third section was armed with traditional weapons. This section had guerrillas who were expert in close-quarter fighting skills and hand-to-hand combat.

The Rear Rank Unit consisted of mainly of the carrier corps under a commander with a few armed guerrillas whose task was to protect the rear. Medical equipment and nurses moved in this rank. Whenever a battle took place, this unit would melt away into the peasant homes and carry out its work with the help of the peasant population.

### KLFA MAJOR BATTLES

The period of the KLFA battles is of great historical significance for it reflected the advance of the struggle in face of major enemy offensives. The powerful imperialist army was matched with the heroic courage, skills and intelligence of the guerrilla leadership. Of the fifteen major battles, ten took place in Mūrang'a and Nyīrī regions because it was the enemy's strategic plan to capture the KLFA headquarters in Nyandarwa, and thus destroy the core leadership of the guerrilla army. These battles were concentrated between May 1953 and March 1955 when the imperialist army, recently equipped with heavy artillery pieces, bombers and fresh Scot, Welsh, English, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, South African and North and South Rhodesian regiments and Euro-American mercenaries, made a fierce onslaught on the Nyandarwa mountains. The patriotic forces checked this onslaught in the great battles in the semi-liberated and liberated areas of Mūrang'a and Nyīrī, and the enemy

retreated with heavy casualties. These were great battles in the defence of the headquarters and our humanity as African people. After their defeat, the enemy retreated away from the liberated areas and changed their tactics. They realized that in order to capture the headquarters they would have to cut off the guerrilla base, which was the patriotic peasantry and workers and not the physical layout of the headquarters.

Meanwhile, apart from the Nairobi KLFA bases, the KWC established branch bases in Kīrīnaga, Kīambuu, Narok and the Rift Valley region. These were important bases for forces could always be summoned when the headquarters were attacked. The Kīrīnaga bases, fortified with the Embu, Mbeere, Merū and Gīkūyū patriots, and supported by the Embu, Mbeere, Merū and Gīkūyū peasantry, were placed like a guard overlooking and protecting the Nyandarwa headquarters. The Rift Valley formed the KLFA rear base and food basket for the guerrilla army.

The battles in the liberated areas, like the Mūrang'a region, were primarily defensive when the British aggressed. In the semi-liberated and enemy controlled areas many small battles took place when the patriotic expeditions were on missions to procure supplies or to release political prisoners from concentration camps, or to punish the Kenyan traitors.

Unable to halt the KLFA offensive, more British troops, white mercenaries, bombers and heavy artillery pieces poured into the country and the recruitment of Kenyan traitors was accelerated. In addition, curfews were imposed, mass arrests and killings of defenseless Kenyans became common place; and the country was divided into liberated, semi-liberated and enemy controlled areas. The enemy officially called these political territories: "Prohibited Areas", "Special Areas" and "Free Areas".

In the semi-liberated areas, the enemy built numerous defence fortresses from which they carried out their barbaric acts against the peasantry. These included: forced collection of taxes; forced labor and forced contribution of farm products to feed the enemy army. They forced the poor workers & peasantry to pay for the war expenses. In some districts such as Mūrang'a, Nyīrī, Embu, Merū and Mbeere, where a 99 percent of the population was engaged in anti-imperialist activities, the British occupiers and their Kenyan allies used the policy of "starving them out" as they called it in order to

pressurize the patriotic population to change sides. Tortures, rapes, killings, looting and confiscation of land, livestock and cooking utensils were the order of the day. More than twenty large concentration camps were built all over the country for torturing and indoctrinating the patriotic people. Special schools, military training centers, cultural and Christian religious centers, and pro-British organizations, like the Maendeleo ya Wanawake (MYW), were constructed for brainwashing the youth of minority nationalities and women. Particularly the MYW was effectively used as a tool of imperialism to conduct torture and psychological terrorism among the patriotic women in concentration camps and simultaneously to spread anti-Mau Mau information in the urban and rural areas.

The enemy spent millions of shillings on anti-Mau Mau propaganda through special services on the radio, leaflets, newspapers and through their Kenyan agents and organizations. Their primary policy was to make Kenyans fight Kenyans, a strategy they used in Malaysia and used later by the American imperialists in Vietnam.

### **KLFA MAJOR CONGRESSES**

The first KLFA Congress was held on March 20, 1953 at Githūgī guerrilla camp in Mūrang'a after the defeat of the enemy forces at the Battle of Naivasha. It was mainly called to coordinate the war efforts and to celebrate the KLFA's victory at the Battle of Naivasha. Two hundred and fifty guerrilla leaders, including Mathenge, Kīmaathi, Enock Mwangi and four KWC representatives attended it. Kīmaathi, who opened the conference, called the Kenyan people to fight with unceasing determination in order to expel the British occupiers from the country. Other speakers included Mbaria wa Kaniū, Enock Mwangi and Mathenge. This was the first KLFA guerrilla meeting held in the forest since the inception of the armed struggle.

The Congress agreed that in order to strengthen the armed struggle, the recruitment drive must be intensified, discipline in the movement be strictly enforced, and the enemies of the movement, both national and foreign, must be liquidated without mercy. It was also agreed that more war fronts would be opened across the country. Towards this end, all the existing guerrilla units were to be brought immediately under Mathenge's command. Another resolu-

tion was also passed to establish a twelve member Supreme War Council (SWC) with Mathenge as chairman and commander-in-chief of the KLFA forces in the forest. Mbaria was appointed as Mathenge's deputy and Kīmaathi the SWC secretary. The principal task of the SWC was to coordinate the war efforts in the forest, to monitor the discipline and performance of KLFA units, to communicate with the Kenya War Council and the district, divisional, locational and sub-locational central committees in the liberated, semi-liberated and enemy controlled areas. Simultaneously, General Mwangi was instructed to reorganize the KLFA units in Nairobi and to coordinate the communication between Nairobi and the Nyandarwa KLFA headquarters and the KWC to coordinate the propaganda front and the material base of the movement.

It was clearly stated that SWC would function as a temporary High Command until the second KLFA conference was held to form a more permanent war council with the approval of the Kenya War Council. In this connection, the SWC secretary was appointed the convener of the second KLFA Congress.

The next day the delegates discussed the recent battle of Naivasha at length, the tactics and strategies used, and resolved to plan a number of such decisive battles as a strategy to keep the enemy busy while the reorganization of the material base was done starting at the base structural levels. The battles, harassment of white racist settlers and native traitors in places far away from the liberated areas, would for a time keep the enemy away from attacking and oppressing the peasant population in the semi-liberated areas, and thus allow the KLFA leadership to consolidate and strengthen the guerrilla army in Nyandarwa and Kīrīnyaga. The revolutionary propaganda caused by the battles would confuse and frighten the *hūmungaati* flunkies and other native quislings, and thus help to break their confidence in the colonialist government. On the other hand, it would raise the morale of the oppressed patriotic population and deepen its anti-imperialist consciousness and revolutionary courage.

In this respect, the country was divided into four zones for the purpose of investigation and reorganization of the structures. Nyandarwa Headquarters was the locus from where the four investigation teams radiated and returned with reports after conferring with patriots working at base levels and frontlines. The revolution-

ary teams were instructed to investigate into all types of guerrilla tactics in cooperation with the local central committees; evaluate enemy strength and plans in each war zone, expand women militia and recruit male and female teenagers in the armed resistance since movement to organize adult males was becoming increasing difficult; encourage patriotic, anti-imperialist culture in the liberated and semi-liberated areas; encourage formation of Mau Mau cells in the concentration camps and intensify the struggle in colonial jails and prisons; and finally, explain the proceedings of the Gīthūgī Congress to the KLFA units and district, divisional, locational and sub-locational central committees.

Meanwhile, British imperialism and its Kenyan traitorous allies continued their war of aggression and intensified their bestial repression of the peasant and worker population and arrest of the patriotic petty-bourgeoisie and the militant, anti-imperialist leadership of the trade union movement and KAU. Dialectically, the imperialist repression helped to steel and forge the revolutionary strength and discipline among our people. The KLFA leadership recognized that though the Mau Mau struggle was organized and started by the patriotic petty-bourgeoisie and militant workers, the peasantry was now responding to the historical conditions and was becoming a great revolutionary force in the rural area. The KLFA forces, which were at the time mobilized to give protection to the development of the material base that was controlled by the peasantry, were beginning to reflect internal contradictions. A new situation was arising responding to changing material conditions and reflecting the fast rate of development of the armed struggle and national anti-imperialist consciousness. Equally, the contradictions were developing and shaping the KLFA leadership and the entire armed movement.

**Mwathe Congress:** On August 16, 1953, in accordance with the Gīthūgī decision, Kīmaathi called a four day congress to be held at Mwathe in Nyandarwa. Letters concerning the forthcoming congress were sent out to all guerrilla field commanders, peasants militia, KWC leaders, Nairobi KLFA commander and base level central committees. When Mathenge received the letter, he saw Kīmaathi's action as a challenge to his leadership. To Mathenge, Kīmaathi was a mere clerk who should not have undertaken it upon himself to schedule such an important conference without consulting the SWC

Chairman. In attempting to clear out the misunderstandings, Kīmaathi wrote to Mathenge explaining that he was not his clerk, but an appointed Secretary-General of the KLFA Supreme War Council, and that he was given the duty and responsibility by Gīthūgī delegates to convene the second congress. Kīmaathi informed Mathenge that the congress would take place as scheduled. In response, Mathenge decided to boycott the congress. Mbaria sided with Mathenge.

The congress was held as scheduled and was attended by more than 5,000 fighters, twelve members of the Kenya War Council, four KLFA representatives from Nairobi including commander Enoch Mwangi, 500 representatives of the peasant-worker militia and base level central committees. One fourth of the peasant militia were women.

Reports heard from central committees of sub-locational, locational, divisional and district levels were bad: forced starvation, forced labor and mass arrests, tortures, rapes and killings were the repeated news. In both urban and rural areas, the enemy killed hundreds of defenseless women, men and children, grisly tortured captured cadres and put thousands of patriots into concentration camps. This had affected the patriotic base organizations, supply lines dislocated, material production, food distribution and communications disrupted, homes burned down and many important documents on the members and important organizational matters lost, and active patriotic cadres disappeared without trace. Therefore, the most important task of the movement, the congress delegates agreed, was: (1) to rebuild the material structures, communication lines and supply routes; (2) to accelerate the recruitment of youth to the guerrilla army and peasant militia; (3) to expand the armed resistance nationwide; and (4) to organize revolutionary propaganda machine in order to counteract enemy's vicious propaganda. It was also agreed that it was necessary to strengthen the confidence of the workers, peasantry and patriotic petty-bourgeoisie in the war of independence that they could withstand, without flagging, the new vicious forms of foreign aggression.

Other major decisions which were to affect the development of the armed movement and Kīmaathi's future as a national leader were also taken. Firstly, the Supreme War Council of which Mathenge was the chairman and Mbaria the deputy was disbanded and a new political and military body, the Kenya Defense Council (KDC), was

created. Kīmaathi was overwhelmingly elected as the KDC president. Simultaneously, he was made the Field Marshal of all the KLFA forces. General Macaria wa Kīmeemia was made Kīmaathi's deputy. Warūhiū wa Itote (Gen. China) was confirmed as the overall commander of the Kīrīnyaga KLFA forces. Mathenge and Mbaria were dropped from the KLFA leadership altogether. Secondly, the guerrillas pledged never to cut their hair and beard until they had expelled the British occupiers from the country. Thirdly, the KLFA leadership made it clear to the fighting forces that national independence could only be achieved through great sacrifice and iron determination; that they must prepare to die, for death was inevitable in the struggle for national liberation. In these efforts the congress passed a resolution to democratize all the decision making in KWC and KDC so that the cadres and guerrillas could participate and be active in protecting the armed movement from internal and external enemies.

**Internal Contradictions:** At the congress, there developed sharp contradictions between Mathenge supporters who refused to read just to the new structure in response to the development of the struggle, and those led by Kīmaathi and Macaria who demanded structural changes and the election of a new capable revolutionary leadership. The internal contradictions led to the need for recording and examining the history of resistance and internal struggles. Thus, Kenya Young Stars Association (KYSA) and the Mau Mau National Archives (MMNA) were formed. The MMNA was a bureau of research and documentation of national history and it had field secretaries spread around the liberated and semi-liberated territories recording KLFA and peasant and worker revolutionary activities, the battles fought and the movement and activities of the enemy. The KYSA consisted of historians and political theoreticians. Their primary task was to organize annual cultural activities and KLFA congresses, to provide the movement with ideological guideline and program.

Broadly speaking, the Mwathe Congress contradictions led to a qualitative leap in the ideological clarification and consequently the development of the armed movement. Seven ideological lines were recognized at this point:

1. The Splinter Group—Large and organized units, which would not submit to the overall discipline of the KWC and KDC leadership. They would operate on their own and preferred not to unite with the main guerrilla army under Kīmaathi's leadership. Their plans were short-term and their perspectives were narrow. They did not understand the dialectics of the national struggle, or the imperialist political manipulations. General Mathenge led this group.

2. *Komerera*—these were KLFA deserters and rejects who escaped from the guerrilla army to avoid military and political discipline. They became notorious for terrorizing peasants and robbing them at night posing as KLFA guerrillas. They thus did considerable damage to the movement's work among the general population and may have helped isolate the guerrillas from their main supporters: peasants and workers. The Kenya War Council and the Kenya Defense Council ordered them eliminated summarily, and General Kago is reputed to have carried out a special campaign aimed at this “bulgar brigade”.

3. *Erīrīri* (opportunist)—these joined the movement without any allegiance to national patriotism. Their main interest was to use the movement to feed their stomachs. When the struggle deepened and the enemy repression intensified most of them deserted the patriotic resistance and joined the enemy camp. They were used as *tūkonia* (hooded and masked traitors who acted as British agents. They used to identify members and cadres of the Mau Mau Movement). During the night they were used as terrorist army. They enriched themselves through looting and plundering. Since most of these traitors were “educated” (could write and speak English) they went on to assume the role of native commercial bourgeoisie after the war of independence.

4. *Thaka and Tai-Tai*—Multiethnic petty-bourgeois fifth columnists. Most of these notorious quislings were operating in the urban centers. During daytime, they were working in colonial offices as “native clerks,” and night time would terrorize African workers in their homes—raped women and robbed the workers. *Thaka* particularly were colonial spies planted in the African working class community. After the war of independence these traitors were appointed by the Kenyatta regime to key positions in government while the neocolonial regime intensified the repression against freedom fighters and other patriots.

5. *Thaata cia Būrūri* (The barren of the land)–regular and tribal police, paramilitary police (*Warūrūngana*), King's African Rifle (KAR) and all those others who wore enemy uniform to fight Mau Mau. They were also referred to as *Thū cia Būrūri* (The enemy of the country).

6. *Hūmungaati* (*Kamatimū, Tūtheeci*) – a notorious colonial force operating particularly in the rural area of central Kenya and the European occupied areas of the Rift Valley. It was given limitless power and it robbed, tortured, raped and killed defenseless peasantry. In the urban centers and the Rift Valley Province, these traitors were multiethnic.

7. Pseudo-guerrilla Unit - A counterinsurgency unit composed of the KLFA renegades and turncoats organized by the British to track their former comrades in the forest and in the urban centers. The damage they did to the patriotic movement was irreparable.

**Karathi Congress:** Six months after the Mwathe Congress, the KDC leadership called a special congress on February 5, 1954, which came to be known as the Karathi Congress. The assembly of about two thousand guerrillas, six KWC representatives, Nairobi KLFA representatives, a large number of local peasant-worker militia and base structural central committees at the congress demonstrated, once again, the worker-peasant and KLFA unity under the KDC leadership. The KDC as the branch of the Kenya War Council in the forest was winning great support in the country and at the base level structures over Mathenge's splittist line.

The congress explained the formation and function of the Kenya Youth Stars Association and the Mau Mau National Archives, which were warmly approved. Democracy was emphasized and stressed at all levels, and in order to ensure greater democratic control over the movement and KLFA in particular, it was suggested that a Kenya Parliament (KP), a higher political institution, be constructed to function as a people's Government. The suggestion was approved and a parliament was formed of democratically elected members. In order to keep the all-Kenya national character of the parliament, seats were reserved for representatives from all the provinces of Kenya and delegations were sent to those provinces inhabited by minority nationalities to explain the Karathi Congress proceedings, particularly the formation of a people's Government.

Under these new arrangements, Kīmaathi was elected the head of the Revolutionary Government and given the title of Prime Minister. To separate government administration from military affairs, Macaria wa Kīmeemia was promoted to a Field Marshal and made the overall commander of the KLFA forces and KDC Chairman.

The need for an overall non-military leadership was necessary basically to embrace and guide the struggle through four fronts: (1) the peasant militia; (2) the urban guerrilla organizations (3) the base level democratic organizations of patriotic militant workers, and petty bourgeoisie; (4) the Mau Mau organizations in the concentration camps, prisons and jails; and the KLFA forces in the forest. Secondly, in order to survive the renewing enemy offensive, the movement had to consolidate a democratic and national character backed by a mass line versus the rule of individual personalities. The individual KLFA generals had so far heroically led and developed the struggle as isolated and anti-imperialist military units with the support of their home locations. Now it was necessary to head towards the development of a government through the development of the four fronts.

Meanwhile, the contradictions between the Mathenge splinter group and the Kenya Parliament leadership were sharpening, weakening the national war effort. Unity with the splittist group was attempted many times by the KP leadership so as to make a united front against imperialism but in vain. At this point, the situation became serious when news was received of the capture and surrender of General China, the Chief Commander of the Kīrīnyaga KLFA forces. The KP called for a period of active vigilance while General China's case proceedings were closely watched and serious investigations were made on his abrupt surrender. A special delegation was sent by KP into the Kīrīnyaga forest and first hand reports were noted. The history of General China and the contradictions within the Kīrīnyaga forces were traced. But still the KP leadership, like many people in the country, could not believe that a man like General China—tested in the battle and an overall commander of the Kīrīnyaga KLFA forces, could not give his life for the liberation of the country, instead of surrendering to the imperialist occupiers.

To save his neck, General China volunteered a fifty-page statement giving the enemy the most comprehensive and detailed information about the movement and the KLFA military secrets. He gave

detailed information about the crucial role the KWC headquarters was playing in terms of supplying the guerrilla army with new recruits and war material, and explicitly explained the significant role of the peasant women in the armed struggle.

On the information he had given, the British staged the biggest military offensive, Operation Anvil, in Nairobi on April 24 in which more than 200,000 workers, who were the backbone of the armed resistance, were arrested and sent to gestapo-like concentration camps. And in central Kenya and European occupied areas, the enemy imposed, by iron and blood, the villagization program whereby the peasantry and squatters were headed into village concentration camps. Thirdly, the digging of a wide trench, fenced with barbed wire, planted mines and bordered by numerous military and police posts, along fifty miles of the forest fringe which separated Nyandarwa and Kīrīnyaga from the rest of the country was a desperate attempt to isolate the guerrillas from their main sources of strength, communications and supplies. In addition, in attempts to extract confessions from captured Mau Mau activists and guerrillas, the enemy resorted to the most horrible methods of torture. In some instances, patriots were dragged by ropes tied to a Land Rover over rough roads for miles, until they died; others were taken into the bush and cut down with bullets when they refused to renounce the armed resistance struggle. Some others (men) were castrated. Patriotic women were raped with soda bottles; *hatha* (a poisonous shrub) was placed into their vaginas, and their breasts were pressed with pliers. Using red-hot iron to burn their bodies were other methods utilized as a means to achieve a political solution.

There is little doubt that Operation Anvil and the villagization program disrupted the movement-organized activities and gradually affected its recruitment program, communication lines and supplies. Most of the leaders including Eliud Mūtonyi (KWC chairperson), Isaac Maina Gathanju (KWC general-secretary), General Enoch Mwangi and Gīcohi wa Gīthua (PCC chairman) were arrested and taken to concentration camps. As a result, the main Mau Mau headquarters was transferred from Mathare Valley to Nyandarwa under the KP leadership and Kīmaathi was made the spokesman of the entire movement.

**Mihuro Congress:** On November 22, 1954, a congress was called at Mihuro, Nyandarwa, to discuss General China's case. About 1,200 fighters, KWC representatives, Nairobi KLFA commanders, 200 peasant-worker militia and the base level control committee representatives attended. General China was pronounced a turncoat, a traitor, and was sentenced to death in absentia by the Mihuro Congress.

With General China's cooperation, the imperialists changed their tactics and strategies from bombing raids and attacks on the liberated areas to psychological warfare, poisoning of river waters and crops in the field, coming into the forests and planting mines. Activities of imperialists and their Kenyan friends disguised as guerrillas also increased and intensified. Through the information obtained from General China and other turncoats, they were playing upon the contradictions between the Mathenge splittist group and the KP leadership. They sent messages of surrender offers and amnesties and negotiations—all in one bag. But the KP leadership stood firm and declared: "We shall never leave these mountains until our country is free.... When we took the revolutionary oath we pledged to our people and country that we shall fight to the last man. We shall never betray that pledge."

**Chieni Congress:** On March 6, 1955, the KP leaders called the Chieni congress to denounce the enemy propaganda and reject all offers of surrender. The congress announced the KLFA stance to the masses, their central committees at all levels, peasant militia and KLFA forces in the forests as well as those in the urban centers. The congress made it clear that there was no change in the direction of putting down arms and then to "negotiate for peace". The imperialist tactics were explained to the assembly. The KP also made renewed attempts to unite with Kenya Riigī (KRG), the central committee of the Mathenge group. It was later discovered that the KRG leadership had accepted the imperialist "negotiations" and under General Kahiū-Itina's leadership were secretly meeting with the British enemy. The KRG leadership had now turned traitors and would be used against the KP leadership and the patriotic armed struggle in general.

Under these new developments a special session of the Kenya Parliament was held on March 26, 1955 and it declared the KRG an

illegal organization and ordered the arrest of its 27 leaders including Mathenge, Mbaria and Kahiū-Itina. A KLFA special force was organized to hunt these liquidatory factionalists down. Simultaneously, the KP leadership noted that the British were organizing a third political party, a combined force of the reactionary petty-bourgeois nationalists and the *hūmungaati* elements, for a neo-colonial settlement.

Between March 1955 and the Fifth KLFA congress, the KP leadership toured the battlefield and held regular meetings with the Mau Mau grassroots organizations to explain the KLFA's stance on negotiations with the British. It was during this tour that Field Marshal Macaria wa Kīmeemia, together with several of his bodyguards, were ambushed and killed by the enemy. His death was irreplaceable. It affected the entire KLFA war machinery.

**Karūri Ngūmane Congress:** The fifth KLFA Congress was held at Karūri Ngūmane, Nyandarwa, on March 26, 1956. The KP clarified its political stance: (1) there would be no surrender to British imperialism and no compromise with the KRG liquidators; (2) all fighting groups or individuals who surrendered would be denounced as traitors to the people's cause and be eliminated; (3) no negotiations with the British occupiers before the withdrawal of their armed forces from Kenya; and (4) any Kenyan political leader, including the Kenya Federation of Labor leadership, who attempts to negotiate with the British without the consent of the KP leadership and its armed forces would be severely punished. There will be no sellout or betrayal of national resistance, the KP leadership stressed. At the same time, the congress delegates admitted that owing to the serious internal contradictions and intrigues within the armed resistance leadership and China's betrayal, and the pro-imperialist line taken by the urban petty-bourgeois reactionaries, the enemy had seized the strategic initiative, and as a result the partisan army was on the defensive and suffered heavy losses on all fronts. Thus, for the immediate period, the congress noted, the revolutionary organization needed the protection of KLFA in rebuilding itself, rather than expansion of its military and political network.

In strong language the congress denounced Mathenge and the Kenya Riigī leadership for taking Warūhiū wa Itote's traitorous line in negotiations with the imperialist enemy. By so doing, they ex-

posed the armed movement's internal weakness and played treacherously into the hands of imperialism. Before 1,700 delegates, the KP leadership condemned the KRG leaders to death for misleading the fighters and betrayal of the motherland, and an order for their arrest and execution was issued.

Thus, at the end of the congress on March 26, 1956, the KP leadership resolved an old and major contradiction between the all-embracing KP's patriotic, anti-imperialist stance and the KRG traitorous line. On March 30, twenty-seven KRG leaders including Mathenge, Mbaria and Kahiū-Itina were arrested and locked in prison whilst the KP leaders discussed their fate. However, the dramatic escape of twenty-six captives including Mathenge on the 5<sup>th</sup> night of their trial changed the situation. The struggle now reached a new stage of contradiction and development.

Firstly, after the breakdown of the surrender negotiations, the KRG liquidatory group disintegrated. Some of its leaders surrendered and gave sufficient information to the enemy about the infrastructure of the guerrilla army. Others like General Kahiū-Itina joined the enemy counterinsurgency force and became its guide in search and destroy missions conducted against the KLFA forces in the forest. General Mathenge did not surrender. On July 2, 1955 his force was surprised by the enemy platoon at Münyanye forest, Nyandarwa, and suffered heavy casualties. Mathenge was among the dead.

Secondly, the KP leadership, in an attempt to prevent the erosion of the guerrilla army, carried a wide range of activities such as touring the battlefield to bolster the morale of the fighters and exposing the counter-revolutionary activities of the KRG liquidators. As the struggle deepened and contradictions sharpened within and outside the Kenya Parliament, and the enemy offensive intensified on all fronts, and the wavering elements, including Karari Njama, deserted the armed resistance and gave themselves up, and to save their necks were more than willing to work for the enemy in tracking their former comrades in the forest and the urban centers.

Thirdly, the capture and execution of the KLFA supreme commander, Dedan Kīmaathi, on February 18, 1957, witnessed the shift of the KLFA command headquarters from Nyandarwa to Kīrīnya under the leadership of Generals Bamūngī and Mwariama.

Fourthly, the British, unable to force the KLFA leadership to lay down their arms and surrender, and exhausted by the war, changed

their strategy. Through the liberalization of the colonial system by allowing the formation of the African political parties and appointing the African elite to key positions in government, they were able to create a tame and emasculated petty-bourgeois leadership whose taste, desire and interest were linked with those of imperialism. By creating a third political force of the urban reactionary petty-bourgeoisie and the *hūmungaati* elements, the British, to a large degree, succeeded in isolating the guerrilla leadership from Kenya's political process. Under these new developments, all attempts by the Kenyan people to establish a unified national constitutional front against the new manipulations and intrigues of British imperialism failed. Consequently, two antagonistic petty-bourgeois political parties, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) and the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), were formed.

KADU consisted of the most reactionary and backward elements of the Kenyan petty-bourgeois class. It drew its strength from imperialism. KANU was principally a coalition of the right-wing group led by Thomas Mboya and James Gicūrū, the spineless liberal nationalists led by Mwai wa Kībakī, and the patriotic, anti-imperialist group led by Oginga Odinga with strong support of the Mau Mau leadership. When Jomo Kenyatta was released on August 16, 1960, he joined KANU, and on December 12, 1963, he became Kenya's national president.

Shortly after the independence celebrations, as we shall see later, there were serious negotiations between the guerrilla leaders and the Kenyatta Government. The Government representatives demanded the guerrillas to stop fighting, to come out of the forest, to surrender their arms. The KLFA spokesman, General Bamūingī, insisted that before the guerrillas called off the armed struggle, the KANU government must dismantle the colonial military machinery and its political structure without conditions or compromise, and recognize the guerrilla army as a national army. When the Kenyatta government rejected these fundamental demands, the negotiations broke down and the guerrillas returned to the forest to continue with the armed resistance until their demand were met. In response, Kenyatta ordered the former colonial army, a combined force of white and black soldiers to return to the forest to hunt down the KLFA forces. General Bamūingī and Chui were killed on the battlefield on January 26, 1965 and their bodies were paraded in Merū

Township for three days. Many KLFA guerrillas were also killed between January and December 1965, and hundreds of the Mau Mau cadres were arrested in the urban centers, tortured and imprisoned without trial. General Mwariama and colonel Mūthoni compromised the KLFA stance and surrendered.

Besides imprisonment and killing of the freedom fighters, the KANU government encourages and supports the distortion of the Mau Mau history in schools and at the university level. Yet this is the best section of our history, because we wrote it with the blood of our hearts. It purified our humanity, deepened and enriched our national ethos.

Finally, it's useful to note here that Mau Mau taught us a great lesson: democracy and liberty are not guaranteed, they are gained through blood and tears and protected by protracted struggle. It also taught us that liberty and justice have their martyrs. This, perhaps, is the most important lesson and legacy of the Mau Mau Movement.

## SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This paper was first published by *Kenya Historical Review* in 1977 and reprinted in 1983 by *Ufahamu*, journal of the African Activist Association in Los Angeles. This is an improved version.
2. The old colonial Central Kenya included the Gikuyu, Embu, Meru, Mbeere, and Akamba peoples.
3. Richard Meinertzhagen, *Kenya Diary: 1902-1906* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1957) p. 66-67.
4. Makhan Singh, *History of Kenya's Trade Union Movement to 1952* (Nairobi: East Africa Publishing House, 1969) 4-6.
5. Stephen Nkomo, "The Rhodesia Crisis: Its source and nature." In *Africa: National and Social Revolution* (Prague: 1967) p. 134.
6. It is known now that at least one hundred and fifty Kenyans lost their lives on that historic day. See *Manchester Guardian* of March 20, 1929. Also see Philip Bolsover, *Kenya: What are the Facts*, London 1953. P. 6.
7. Quoted in C.G. Robert, *The Myth of Mau Mau: Nationalism in Kenya* (New York: Praeger, 1966) p. 51.
8. Whilst in detention, Harry Thuku was bought out by imperialism and he became its running dog after his release. He was one of the imperialist collaborators during the Mau Mau war of independence.
9. Nkomo, p. 135.
10. Interview with James Beuttah, November 1976.
11. Mathu, p. 17.
12. *Ibid.* p. 7.
13. Bildad Kaggia, *Roots of Freedom 1921-1963* (Nairobi: East Africa Publishing House, 1976). P. 116.
14. D. P. Singh, "Mau Mau: A Case Study of Kenyan Nationalism," in *Africa Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (April-June 1968) p. 14.
15. Makhan Singh was arrested and detained in Lokitaung by the colonial government in 1950. "Makhan Singh," the dictatorship of the colonialists declared, "will be detained there for an indefinite period, unable to leave the area without written consent of the Police Commissioner, and even unable to visit shops, stations or telegraph offices without written permission."
16. Kaggia, p. 15.
17. *Ibid.* p. 76.

18. The leading militants within KAU were Bildad Kaggia, secretary of Nairobi Branch, F. Kubai, chairman of Nairobi Branch, James Beauatah, chairman of Mūrang'a Branch and vice-president of the central Kenya KAU council, H. Wamūthenya, chairman of Nyīrī Branch, H. Wambūgū, vice-chairman of Nyīrī Branch, Kīragū Kagotho, secretary of Nyīrī Branch, Pratt Njogu, chairman of Embu Branch, R.J. Gīkunju, secretary of Embu Branch, John Mbiyū Koinange, chairman of Kīambuu Branch, Kūng'ū Karūmba, chairman of Limuru Branch, Charles Wambaa, chairman of Gīkūyū Branch, J.D. Kali, assistant secretary of Nairobi Branch, P.J. Ngei, KAU assistant secretary.
19. D.P. Singh, p.14. Also see Negley Farson's *The Last Chance in Africa* (New York: Harcourt, 1950.)
20. D.P. Singh, p. 15.
21. Kaggia, p. 114.
22. The Kenya Citizens Association was inaugurated on October 23, 1950, to deal with race relations. The settlers and the Christian church leaders controlled it.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 114-115.
25. Philip Bolsover, *Kenya: What Are the Facts?* (London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1953) p. 4.
26. George Padmore, *Pan-African or Communism*, (London: Dobson, 1953), p. 256.
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28. Kaggia, p. 113.



## KENYATTA, MOI AND THE KANU DICTATORSHIP

In 1952 the British colonial settlers found it hard to believe that the people of Kenya had resolved to use revolutionary violence against white supremacy. Their common political belief at the outset was that the Mau Mau Movement had, and could have, no wide support amongst the oppressed Kenya masses. They dismissed it as the sinister work of "communist agitators," "activist," and "anti-white terrorists," believing that British imperialism could not be defeated by "a bunch of disorganized agitators." They held this belief, blind to the determination and courage of the anti-imperialist resistance, until the British Empire collapsed in 1960 in our country. Bildad Kaggia, the former member of the Mau Mau Central Committee, states:

When we picked up arms in 1952 it was a clear indication that we rejected foreign domination; we reaffirmed our steadfast fortitude and determination, and no matter the great sacrifice, we were determined to win national independence for our people and country. Consciously, we were aware that no people ever won their independence without bloodshed.

Kenya's long anti-imperialist struggle, culminating in self-government in 1962, independence in 1963, and republic in 1964, represented a largely united cry for national self-determination, and the inalienable human and natural rights of a people to harness their resources for their own welfare according to their own collective and democratic wishes. Historically, it was a political trendsetter in Africa. It forced British imperialism to change its colonial policy in Africa. In their book, *Nationalism and New States in Africa* (1984), Mazrui and Tidy write:

With a major colonial war on her hands in East Africa, and growing political militancy in West Africa, Britain undertook an agonizing reappraisal of her presence in Africa. By 1957 the first black colony in Africa emerged from British colonial control. The independence of Ghana was triumph not only for the oratory of Nkrumah but also for the courage of Kimathi (sic), a victory not only for the organized efforts of the Convention People's Party in Ghana but also for the armed endeavor by the Mau Mau in Kenya, a fulfillment not only for Africans in the streets of Accra but also for Africans in the forest of [Nyandarwa] Mountains. If World War II had helped to break the British imperial will in Asia, the Mau Mau insurrection had helped to break it in Africa. Military factors once again played a part in African liberation, but in the case of the collapse of the British imperial will, it was not a military coup in London but a couple of wars which were decisive.

Though the history of Kenya's anti-imperialist struggle has often been distorted and betrayed, it symbolizes the indomitable determination of the majority of Kenyans to reconstruct an entirely new social order in Kenya and to take the country in an entirely new, anti-imperialist direction. In summary, it was the general popular desire and wish that the previous colonial and racist regime be dismantled and replaced with a militant anti-imperialist national one which would not only eradicate vestiges of the past, but would also protect the people from further oppression or exploitation. Kenyans expected the new governing order to initiate immediate measures towards reconstruction, redistribution and overall equitable social development. They wanted the entire economic infrastructure (finance, commerce, industry, mines, etc.) to be collectively owned and run by the people in order to ensure full national benefit and control, and the land issue to be resolved justly and democratically through an agrarian revolution.

Specifically, the popular understanding was that the independent Kenyan government would nationalize all the land occupied by the foreign capitalists and divide it amongst the Kenyan poor and

landless: that it would ensure full democratic rights of assembly, association and expression, as the Kenyan struggle remains inseparable from, and in solidarity with, those of all other subjected peoples and nations of Africa and the rest of the Third World. Furthermore, it was a clear understanding that the rich indigenous cultural heritage rooted in our own history, tradition and national experience would be protected from harmful foreign influences and that the majority of the African population, having borne the brunt of oppression and been dispossessed by colonialism, would receive preferential, remedial, or compensatory considerations in all spheres of Kenya's political and social life.

Broadly speaking, this was the main position of Mau Mau, the Kenya Land Freedom Army, and *Kīama Kīa Mūingī* (KKM) as embodied in the Kenya African National Union Manifesto of 1960 for national independence, social democracy and stability. By supporting the popular demands of the people and by its anti-imperialist stance, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) under Kenyatta's leadership won the 1963 general elections overwhelmingly and defeated all the other pro-British and reactionary Kenyan parties. Thus KANU's stand emerged as the choice of the people to lead the country to national independence and progress. It is absolutely wrong to assert or imply that KANU won in 1963 because of this or that individual leader or group of leaders. KANU won because of the massive popularity of its principled, anti-imperialist manifesto. Imperialist forces and their Kenyan friends and allies, such as the members of the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) as well as most white settler elements, were understandably distressed by these developments and set out to undermine Kenyan unity in order to defeat the national anti-imperialist struggle and to demolish national patriotism.

Having overwhelmingly won the elections, it only remained for the KANU leadership to use its majority in Parliament to form a strong patriotic government of national reconstruction and redress in order to speedily implement the principles of the Manifesto. Yet is this what happened?

Of Course not!

It is now common knowledge in our country that this was never to be.

The aspirations of millions of dispossessed and expectant Kenyans were thrown overboard by the same government which they put into power. Beginning around 1965, Kenyatta, whom the people erroneously expected would take a militant, anti-imperialist stance, began to display openly his true color. He began to see eye to eye with the Anglo-American imperialists, the former *hūmungaati* leaders, the KADU reactionaries, and he simultaneously worked closely with the KANU right-wing elements led by Tom Mboya and James Gĩcūrū to oust the anti-imperialist force from the party and government. Further, instead of dismantling the coercive colonial machinery, he decided to keep it intact for use against patriotic Kenyans.

At the same time, Kenyatta's leadership vigorously campaigned against the former Mau Mau freedom fighters who were not prepared to accept without a struggle what they saw as Kenyatta's and KANU's progressive surrender of the interests of the Kenyan people to neocolonial interests. The majority freedom fighters consistently insisted that besides implementing the KANU Manifesto, the KANU government should immediately and without delay: (1) return all the land that was confiscated by the British colonial occupiers during the Mau Mau war to the original owners with compensation; (2) recognize the Kenya Land Freedom Army as a national army and unconditionally dismantle the colonial military machinery and close down the British military bases in the country; (3) arrest all those Kenyans who took arms against KLFA and charge them for the atrocities they had committed against the people; (4) provide free education to all Kenyan children; and (5) build a national monument for the Mau Mau-KLFA martyrs and assist families of the freedom fighters who died during the war of national independence. To counteract the demands of the KLFA guerrillas, Kenyatta told the nation:

Some people, particularly the so-called freedom fighters, have been going around saying that all European farms will be distributed freely to the landless. But I want to make it very clear that no one will be allowed to occupy land which is not his and I will crush anyone who goes against the policy of my Government.

And again:

*Hakuna cha bure.*<sup>1</sup> Those who want free things should either go to China or Tanzania.

In addition, Kenyatta made it very clear that the KANU government did not recognize the heroic role played by the KLFA guerrillas during the national struggle for independence:

I hear that some people claimed that they fought and died for *Uhuru*. I don't want to hear this rubbish because we all fought for *Uhuru* in our own ways....We are determined to have independence in peace and we shall not allow hooligans to rule Kenya. We must have no hatred towards one another. Mau Mau was a disease which had been eradicated, and must never be remembered again.

While intensifying the campaign against the former KLFA guerrillas and the KANU militants, Kenyatta and his cabinet ministers, members of Parliament and senior civil servants were busy looting, amassing great wealth and consolidating their power in the government and Party. Under the new land policy of "willing seller, willing buyer," the comprador rulers grabbed large estates in the former "Whites-Only" highland area. Parasitic, corrupt and unproductive, the KANU comprador rulers became willing collaborators with the economy of neocolonialism, and even more vicious and greedy than the former British colonial occupiers.

For their refusal to mortgage the country, to betray Mau Mau and the KANU Manifesto of 1960, Bildad Kaggia, Oginga Odinga and other anti-imperialist militants were expelled from KANU and Parliament in 1966. Later, some of them, particularly those who refused to recant, were arrested and jailed. Makhan Singh was dismissed as a communist and denied a job in government and was closely followed by secret police until he died. Pio Gama Pinto, General Bamūingī, and J.M. Kariūki were outright murdered. As for the former KLFA guerrillas, the KANU government branded them a security risk and excluded them from national politics altogether. Their efforts to regroup and organize themselves as a political force were vigorously and violently suppressed. Intimidation and

other brutal methods were used to silence them. Further, to stifle national patriotism, Kenyatta's regime became extremely intolerant and sensitive to criticism. It prohibited public debate on national and foreign issues, and treated genuine constructive criticism as sedition or treasonable crime. The trade union movement was strangled, and no opposition political party was allowed. The former colonial army under the British commander was sent to fight the KLFA guerrillas who had returned to the Nyandarwa and Kĩrĩyaga mountains to oppose with guns the sellout policy of the KANU regime.

By the time of his death, Kenyatta had transformed Kenya from a colonial state into a neocolonial state, consolidated the comprador dictatorship and chained the working class to the tails of the IMF and the World Bank. In essence, this was an outright betrayal of Kenya's independence, the betrayal of the Mau Mau struggle.

The lines below express the political indignation of the former guerrillas:

Today  
We walk in the streets  
In rage  
In rags  
In famine  
Shoeless  
Jobless  
While those who watched  
The struggle from the sidelines  
Those who betrayed the patriotic struggle  
Now have taken control of the new state

They eat the best food our country produces  
Sleep in warm golden beds  
Name streets and buildings after them  
Erect monuments to them

Wanja wa Mügo, a peasant woman and a Mau Mau veteran, told the author on July 07, 1978:

Today the majority of the former freedom fighters wander about in the country in quest of jobs and something to

eat and they complain very bitterly that they were betrayed by the Government which they put into power. You see, despite our great sacrifice during the Mau Mau war of national independence, the Kenyatta government sided with the British and the Kenyan traitors against us. Kenyatta and KANU betrayed the precious blood we shed for land and freedom. Consequently, we have been left without freedom or food: to hold a public meeting is a crime, to make use of any civil rights is met with a rain of brutality, and the road to independence and progress is paved with the bricks of betrayal, half-truths and false promises.

In essence, Kenyatta's neocolonial rule left a retarded economic program, divided the people of Kenya, and contributed significantly to the present political instability.

When Kenyatta died in 1978 his vice-president, Daniel arap Moi, succeeded him. Unlike Kenyatta, Moi was more anxious to paint Kenya as a "democratic," economically stable country in order to attract more financial aid and loans from the West. For three and a half years, Moi pointed with pride to the fact that under his government no Kenyan was imprisoned for his political beliefs and there was no censorship of thoughts. However, in May 1982, he swiftly reversed his position and ordered the police to arrest those Kenyans who opposed the neocolonial policy of his government and others who were teaching "foreign ideologies" at the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University. In this connection, lawyers, politicians, academics, journalists, workers and peasants were arrested and imprisoned indefinitely without trial. Other critics of the regime were dismissed from their government jobs and expelled from the Party as enemies of the state.

The "crimes" that dumped so many of our compatriots into the prison darkness or political limbo were their sturdy refusals to support the mortgage of our country to world imperialism. And the price for such stubbornness runs very high in a country increasingly given to political fanaticism, terror and repression. The frightening midnight call, cell filled with water, the interrogator with instruments of torture, have become the order of the day under Moi's increasingly authoritarian regime.

In June 1982 the Moi-KANU government rushed through Parliament an amendment to the constitution, making Kenya a *de jure* one-party state. The change of the constitution was illegal but was very important to the repressive regime. It consolidated the power of the President, giving him control of the state, the Party and Parliament. In other words, it consolidated a one-party dictatorship and closed all the doors to democracy, leaving our people defenseless before the state terror and repression. On April 15, 1991 the U.S.-based human rights organization, the Committee to Protect Journalists, reported:

The regime's political monopoly has been achieved through a number of measures, including a 1982 constitutional amendment which established the Kenya African Nation Union (KANU) as the nation's sole legal party; the replacement in 1986 of secret balloting in primary elections with queue voting, which requires citizens to line up behind a photograph of the candidate they favor, and a 1988 amendment abrogating senior judges' tenure.

Why had Moi brought back the hated practice of imprisonment without trial, reinforced state repression, and imposed harsh censorship throughout the country? Firstly, by 1982, his government, shaken by public scandals and corruption in high places was powerless to cope with the worsening economic situation and the erosion of its political power without using terror and political intimidation.

Secondly, opposition to his government was gaining strength amongst the workers and peasants, the university progressive intellectuals and students. In May 1982 the first underground revolutionary newspaper, *Pambana*, the organ of the December Twelve Movement (DTM), was widely distributed across the country. It called the people of Kenya to organize to overthrow the repressive regime:

Kenyans have been massively betrayed. The revolution we launched with blood has been arrested and derailed. KANU and its government have disorganized all spheres of economic production, have scattered all communal efforts at organization, have sowed unprincipled discord and enmity among our peoples, and have looted unspeak-

able sums of money and national wealth. They have finally given our entire country over to US imperialism to use as a political and military base. All these crimes have been wrought in the name of "Progress and Prosperity."

True independence is a SACRED thing. It is revolutionary. It means a clean break, a new start with no fetters from the past oppressive machinery. It means a fiercely vigilant nation led by a strong people's organization, which works with the people's initiative in building a new society, with new forms and new modes of thought. True independence releases vast new energy and creativity. Kenya has no independence.

Thirdly, the KANU government's secret deal with the United States in 1981 which provided America with military bases in Kenya in return for continuing food aid became public knowledge in 1982. This mortgage of our country to US imperialism sparked off vigorous national criticism, and led to the call for the formation of a second political party to debate such national issues.

Between 1982 and 1989 the mortgage of our country to the IMF and the World Bank was completed in exchange for a strong guarantee that international imperialist capital and the US ruling circles would support the existence of the Kenyan comprador state. With that assurance, Moi and his men tightened their ruthless grip on the political life of the country. The censorship of expression was brutally reinforced—public lectures and people's theater were banned, progressive and Marxist books censored, elections rigged, patriotic academics gagged and university campuses occupied by the KANU secret police. On September 13, 1984, Moi demanded that all Kenyans must sing like parrots:

Ladies and Gentlemen, we Kenyans are happy apart from the fact that there is widespread drought. I would like to say while here with you, that for progress to be realized there should be no debates in newspapers on this and that. What is required is for people to work in a proper manner...

I call on all ministers and every other person to sing like parrots. During Mzee Kenyatta's period I persistently

sang the Kenyatta (tune) until people said: This fellow has nothing (to say) except to sing for Kenyatta. I say: I didn't have ideas of my own. Why was I to have my own ideas? I was in Kenyatta's shoes and therefore, I had to sing whatever Kenyatta wanted. If I had sung another song, do you think Kenyatta would have left me alone? Therefore you ought to sing the song I sing. If I put a full stop, you should also put a full stop. This is how this country will move forward. The day you become a big person [like me], you will have the liberty to sing your own song and everybody will sing it....

In the process of fighting the censorship over thought, the Kenyan press has been under constant attack by the repressive comprador regime, which accuses sections of the press of being on the payroll of some foreign masters whose intent is to create division and turmoil in Kenya by publishing "divisive," "seditious" news, editorials and articles. This stifling of the Kenyan press, which from colonial times has never really been free, leaves only the yellow-press products to flood the streets and newspaper stalls. Thus, in Kenya we cannot talk of the freedom of press to write objectively on particular controversial issues and thereby display its journalistic integrity. Already a number of patriotic and progressive journalists have been jailed allegedly for holding and expressing "subversive" views. In recent years, journals and magazines have been banned for refusing to "sing like parrots." To be found in possession of a copy of any of this banned literature is a chargeable offense, punishable by seven years in prison.<sup>3</sup> On December 6, 1987, Africa Watch, an international human rights organization, commented:

Systematic harassment of the press and consistent efforts to suppress freedom of expression have made it extremely difficult for any other democratic institutions, such as the judiciary and parliament, to operate effectively, especially as Kenya is a one-party state. The government's intolerance of dissent has also had a chilling impact on academic freedom and on the ability of church leaders to voice concern about issues of national importance. This antagonism towards press freedom has led to frequent

clashes between the government and the country's only political party, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) on the one side, and the churches, the Law Society of Kenya and the press on the other.

The Christian church leadership in Kenya has been seen by Moi and KANU as an unregistered opposition political party simply because patriotic clergymen have expressed their strong opposition to the *de jure* one-party dictatorship, to the "queuing" method of election, to corrupt practices in the upper echelons of power, and to such antisocial vices and corruption practiced by the top comprador bureaucrats who themselves preach against these vices. Consistently, the clergy have protested against the detention without trial, against arbitrary and illegal imprisonment, against the shoot-to-kill decree and mass killing of Kenyans in Northeastern Province and West Pokot under unconstitutional emergency laws.

Sometimes the confrontation between the individual church leaders and the dictator has been so pitched that it has led to the banning of certain churches and detention or killing of their leaders. The unscrupulous regime has become so intolerant that the openly expressed views of the church leaders are seen as a political threat to the dictatorship. The recent assassination of Bishop Muge was a clear warning to the Christian church and the people of Kenya that the KANU dictatorship will use iron and blood to silence any dissent. After the brutal murder of Bishop Muge, Umoja-Kenya (USA Mwakenya Branch) issued the following statement:

Kenya best remembers Bishop Muge as a fearless critic of the Kenya government, of its human rights abuses, of its violence against the people it ought to serve, and of its pathological state of corruption. But after his wrangles with the regime following his exposure of the Pokot famine, Bishop Muge was persuaded into a change of strategy. Henceforth he allowed himself to be drawn into its innermost circle, believing that in this new capacity he can have significant positive influence on the direction of Kenya's politics. But his short spell as an advisor and a confidant of the regime was enough to convince him otherwise: it was enough to convince him that the regime's

political rot and moral decay are too deep, too pervasive to be salvaged from within, that it must be completely dumped lock, stock and barrel. True to his conscience, Muge took the courageous step of rejecting the patronage of the regime and taking the murderous bull by the horn. And that cost him his life.

While this violence is definitely a reaction to the unyielding resistance of the Kenyan people, it is calculated to intimidate the nation into silence and inaction. And as the resistance progresses we are bound to witness more incarcerations, more brutalities, more murders.

Between 1982 and 1990 the Kenyan Security Forces have killed more than 10,000 Kenyans, and to justify this naked atrocity the dictator explains that those who have been killed are common criminals, *Shifta* bandits, and MWAKENYA dissidents, not law abiding citizens.

The University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University have for a long time been considered hotbeds of "subversive" Marxist academics and students, and have borne the brunt of the dictatorship's savage terror. Atrocities such as indiscriminate beating up of students during peaceful demonstrations by the KANU police have been a regular occurrence. In August 1982, countless numbers of students were beaten and sexually assaulted. Others were mowed down with machine guns in the regime's efforts to crush the Kenya Air Force coup attempt.

In Kenya, to take up the pen and criticize the state president is to put one's life in danger at the hands of a comprador regime which confuses constructive criticism with treason. I went to jail in June 1982 for six and half years for trying to write the history of the Mau Mau Movement, and when I was released in 1988, I could not be employed in my own country because my name is on the list of political criminals and I had been in prison. Furthermore, I had refused to apologize to dictator Moi for my "crime" while I was in prison. The extinction of academic freedom is a cause of serious concern because in Kenya, as everywhere in the Third World, the university is one of the few social institutions where serious research is done and where national issues should be vigorously debated. It is also the training ground for the country's intellectual leadership.

Apart from the extinction of academic freedom, the mass democratic organizations and associations such as the trade union movement, students' unions and women's organizations are no longer autonomous democratic bodies but KANU-affiliates, and leadership is attained through the same coercive methods as those used to select the Party leadership and members of Parliament. Other mass democratic organizations such as the University Staff Union and the Civil Servants Union were outrightly banned. The dictator also banned all social welfare organizations like New Akamba Union, Gema, Luo Union, etc.

Let us see how this all-pervasive repression manifests itself in Kenyan penal institutions. The Kenyan prison system is itself a colonial hangover inherited intact by the KANU government under Kenyatta's leadership.

Once you have been earmarked for arrest, it can take place anywhere, anytime, any day. Usually before six o'clock in the morning:

First comes the savage knock on the door. It is 2 o'clock in the morning. Wife goes to the door and asks: "Who is there?" A man's voice answers: "Friends of the family." She refuses to open, then the caller begins to pound on the door with a hammer. The wall around the wall frame begins to give in, to crack. And just before the door caves in, the head of the secret police gives an order:

*Fungua! Open!*

*Fungua! Open!*

*Sisi ni sheria. We are the law.*

Arrests are usually accompanied with a thorough search for so-called "seditious literature" or "communist literature" which can be anything, including books, magazines, manuscripts, research notes, letters, personal photographs, academic certificates, birth certificates, typewriters, etc. Then the long arduous journey starts, a journey of torture and imprisonment. The captive is taken to Nyayo House

(Kenya's John Vorster's Square) where he is hidden in a dark cell for weeks or months undergoing brutal interrogation and torture.

The torture system culminates in the victim being locked up in a "swimming pool" cell naked, in chains, without food or water for more than seven days. In this appalling condition, a prisoner sleeps in the water, sits in it, urinates and defecates in it. This method of torture started in 1982 after the coup attempt, when it was used against Kenya Air Force personnel. Today, it is practiced with utmost perfection and callousness. Other forms of torture also take place simultaneously. The captive is beaten with a barbed wire rod, he is kept in solitary confinement, he is hanged from the ceiling, he is psychologically brutalized and humiliated. In short, he is subjected to any brutal repression that can coerce him to "confess" —to give names of his political friends and relatives, to admit that he is a member of MWAKENYA and to sign a false "confession." Whatever form of torture one is subject to, the road finally leads either to prison or death.

A political prisoner has an aura of being "dangerous," of being a "threat," of being worthy of a "special watch." This aura entails both close and remote surveillance, even if the victim is in solitary confinement. In the minds of the prison authorities, whoever can be bold enough to oppose the dictator must surely be a "dangerous" person, an enemy of the state. This pathological fear is not only confined to the prison authorities. It reflects the fear of the comprador state. The comprador state is afraid of those who have the courage and fortitude to point out its crimes, expose its underhanded dictatorial dealings, its repressive manipulations and dirty maneuvers. Thus, a political prisoner in Kenya remains a political prisoner always whether he is in prison or free, whether he is active or inactive. The aura will always remain around him.

Upon entering the prison reception handcuffed and in his civilian clothes, the captive is ordered to squat. While still in that position, he is subjected to a flurry of affronts and kicks. But what strikes one during that moment of infinity is the difference in language and unwarranted hostility—expressed with contempt, sarcasm and hatred. An abusive language that makes one's heart bleeds in anger and indignation. The captive is asked, for instance:

Are you a Marxist? If you believe in communism, how come you don't go to the Soviet Union or China? If it was my responsibility, I'd send all you fucking communists to the cemetery. Do you believe in Nyayoism?<sup>4</sup> Why have you refused to support Moi's government?

Do you know that your face looks like a rotten cunt or an elephant's arsehole?

Do you know where your wife is right now? She is selling her cunt in the streets.

Let me guess: You are either a motherfucker or a son of a whore. Which one of these two is correct?

Professor, here is not the university; we are going to fuck your arse if you don't obey our orders. Do you understand that?

These questions and comments sound simple, annoying and brutal, but their psychic effects are profound indeed.

Next the handcuffs are removed and then the captive is ordered to strip naked for a body search. They search each and every crevice in the body, and let the captive stand there while the guards taunt him. It's only after this that he is thrown a stinking tattered prison uniform, known as "*kūngūrū*." It is a white short trouser and a short sleeved shirt. No underwear or shoes. After putting them on, the captive is then given a cloth bag in which to dump his civilian clothes, shoes and non-valuable personal items he may possess. His valuable items are put in a separate bag. Politely, he is called in the office, given a pen and a piece of paper to write his last Will. He is given his prison number and then ordered out of the office—in fact, violently pushed out and ordered to squat as he waits to be shaven clean of hair and beard. While still in that position, he is given a pair of threadbare blankets loaded with lice, a plastic cup and a chamber pot painted with human feces. After the reception officer has finished with him he is skin searched again for concealed weapons or money. Finally, he is given a guard to escort him into the prison compound where he finds multitudes of languishing, pathetic-look-

ing and very emaciated captives, with very long stares beyond the mountain-high walls. If he is considered a "dangerous prisoner," he is locked in a solitary cell.<sup>5</sup> The cell is about six feet wide, eight feet long and about ten feet high, with a naked electric bulb that burns twenty-four hours a day. There is a small barred window high in the wall. Like other cells, his cell has no bed, no mattress, no wash bowl, no toilet. His bed is composed of two old tattered blankets; yet even this is an ideal bed, for there are many political and criminal prisoners who have no blankets at all, they sleep on cold cement floors. Before the guard locks the steel door, he gives the captive a brief "pep talk":

You are here because you are a political dissident, you have been working against *Nyayo* government... Let me give you a good advice: if you want to finish your prison term in one piece, you must respect the prison authorities —obey all prison rules and regulations without question, and don't attempt to write a book in prison, that would cost you your life.... We shall release you when Moi decides that you are completely rehabilitated and have re-canted your political beliefs...

The prison living conditions are very hostile and nauseating. The food is unpalatable; it is a swill. Always, it is a pint of cold, nasty, sugarless porridge, which goes for breakfast, a pellet of *ugali* (mealy maize) and a serving spoonful of watery green vegetable soup. Usually, the greens are yellow and full of worms. This passes for lunch, while supper is the rotten boiled beans, full of stones, and half-cooked *ugali* full of sand. Every day, every week, every month, every year, the food remains the same. One cannot easily conceive of how a captive can possibly live on that kind of diet throughout his jail term. But this is the truth of Kenyan prison life.

As for those sick prisoners who are recommended by the prison medic for the so-called "special diet" (which is really nothing different, being basically rotten cabbages and beans and a pint of milk) they have to undergo a protracted fight to get this recommendation approved by the prison authorities to be effective. For politicals, the so-called "special diets" are almost out of the question—even if one is very sick! The prison authorities argue that the objective of jailing

the opponents of the state is to break them, to make them submit. And one of the ways of breaking political prisoners is to deny them their rights, by treating them punitively without mercy. By recommending and approving "special diets," the prison authorities strongly insist they will be nurturing their own enemies instead of starving them to surrender or death. If, however, one is broken and seeks favors from the prison authorities, then such favors will be given, but in very calculated forms, because a political prisoner is a potential danger—an enemy of the state.

Besides physical torture, prisoners are deliberately starved by late meals, half-cooked nasty food, small quantities of food and sometimes no meal at all. For every form of starvation, the prison authorities have an excuse: water shortage, electric power failure, technical defects in the boiler, no firewood, the contractors did not bring food and all sorts of other sickening excuses. It is important to point out that starvation is the most powerful weapon of torture in the hand of the dictator, for it demolishes the psychological resistance of the captive and forces him to succumb.

Disease is also used as a tool of torture in prison. The Hippocratic Oath does not bind the prison medics. They closely work with the brutal prison authorities in their efforts to deny prisoners proper medical care. In 1986, I smuggled out the following message to my wife:

While the comprador rules  
Are playing golf  
Whoring  
Fornicating each other's wives  
Enjoying the freedom  
Which our people paid for in blood  
My hair is falling  
My face is full of deep wrinkles  
And I am going blind  
I cannot see beyond the front door  
Hunger and starvation terrorize me

They feed me rotten food  
Full of deadly microbes

I share my cell with lice and fleas  
With ticks and bedbugs

I am very sick  
But they have denied me medicine  
They are preparing for my funeral

Broadly speaking, prison cells are overcrowded and unhealthy for human beings. It is difficult for those persons who have never been in prison to imagine six or seven men living in a room eight feet by six feet, spending everyday locked up in a cold cell. Those long unbearable hours inside the cell cause havoc to the health and psychology of the prisoners and are often the prelude to mental and moral breakdown of prisoners. Apart from that there are revolting conditions of filth in the whole prison. The sanitation facilities are poor and inadequate, hence the toilets and bathrooms look like an open sewer. One very dehumanizing scene is the queuing for the toilet. Usually, over two hundred prisoners use one toilet, and half of the prisoners have diarrhea. One can imagine the pain of waiting and the psychological torment that goes with it.

Another very traumatic form of human abuse enforced in prison is that of eating while squatting. Upon being awakened at 5:00 A.M., prisoners are counted while squatting; after the count the cells are opened or unlocked for prisoners to go out for the cold sugarless porridge breakfast. They take their breakfast while squatting and surrounded by bludgeon carrying prison guards. During lunch-time and in the evening, the prisoners eat while squatting as they are also simultaneously counted. The counting alone takes more than an hour. Of course, they say there is no hurry in prison because prisoners have reached the end of the world and the guards are on duty twenty-four hours a day. The beating of the prisoners continue as the count continues.

The most painful and humiliating prison experience is the body search popularly known as *Tero* (terror). It is usually announced as an "emergency," or a "curfew" and everybody is ordered to stay at a standstill. Sometimes it is more ruthless, more degrading. It may be done at dawn or dusk. Normally, the guards come before 5 o'clock in the morning and order the captives out of their cells naked and make them squat facing the silent walls while holding their ears with

their fingers. They surround them and order them to jump up and down, their fingers on their ears, still facing the walls. This method of torture is known as a "frog-dance." As it is being performed, the cruel guards hit the captive with their brutal nightsticks, kick their bare buttocks with their combat boots. Apart from frog-dance, there is walking on knees on the rough cement floor, while the victim's arms are spread sideways. After these traumatic performances, the prisoners are ordered to stand up and bend over with their legs apart for their rectal examinations. The bestial skin search, abusive language, and sexual molestation are reminiscent of the former British colonial state in Kenya.

Clearly, it is important to point out the parallels between the bestial repression to which our people are subjected by the KANU regime and the repression, which was used by the British imperialist occupiers against the Mau Mau prisoners of war. In December 1956 my brother who was held at Embakasi Detention Camp for being a member of Mau Mau sent the following message to my mother:

... I was beaten, whipped, and kicked almost every day for three weeks before my white interrogators relented, my middle finger was dislocated. I was then made to stand in a feces-filled cell for seven days without clothes, food, or water. But I remained firm; I refused to betray the fatherland. Seven comrades were tortured to death. It was a painful death.

A month after, he wrote again:

.... The combination of hunger and physical torture is unbearable... A week ago I was tied to a ceiling by the wrists and whipped while naked until I lost my consciousness. My body is all torn up. I am very sick but they have denied me medicine; three more comrades died after the torture. Their deaths give us strength to protect the secrets of the Movement with our lives. It is our country or death.

A similar message was smuggled out of Kamītī Prison in 1986 by one of the political prisoners [Mūngai wa Warūngī] who wrote:

After the arrest they blindfolded me and took me to Nyayo House, forced me to strip naked and immediately started beating me. After the savage beating, they handcuffed me, left me lying on the concrete floor for two days without food or water. I lost a lot of blood, I thought I was going to die.

After two days they came for me, took me for interrogation. They wanted me to sign a false confession, but I refused. This action of defiance made them very angry; consequently, they started beating me again, then they burned the tip of my penis with a butt of a cigarette. The pain was unbearable and when I started screaming, they jammed a piece of stinking cloth in my mouth. During this torture I lost almost my physical resistance, but I refused to recant. Next they put me in a "swimming pool" cell. After four-days in the water naked, I could not take it any more, I signed the false confession. The following morning they took me to a kangaroo court and jailed me for a crime I had not committed. I feel bitter about this...<sup>6</sup>

In summary, Kenya represents a classic example of a civilian dictatorship, with concrete overtones of fascism. The "Queuing System" was invented in order to give the dictator an open field to rig the election, to pick and choose his political minions for parliamentary seats. In fact, in order to be elected, nay, to be appointed to Parliament through the much opposed, abhorred queuing system, one must sincerely be a *nyayo* sycophant. One must literally worship the "Emperor" by kneeling down before him, as an expression of total subservience, and even allow one's wife or daughter to become a "mistress" of insatiably lecherous dictator. In the cabinet and other higher circles of power, rumors are rife about how the dictator selects his "mistresses" from the promiscuous wives of his cabinet ministers, members of parliament, government officials, even schoolgirls. It is unbelievable how low men can sell their consciences for cheap political and material rewards—men who brag in bars and at political rallies about their leadership qualities, their political convictions and personal integrity and wealth. These subservient forms of behavior are the reflection of a society, which is based on brutal terror, and violent society, which is heavily censored, whose thoughts and ideas

are tightly controlled. This brutal attempt to reduce Kenyans to mindless buffoons, to strip them all of their basic liberties and freedoms, justifies MWAKENYA's call: Moi and KANU must go!

But Who is Moi?

### **Update**

**Full name:** Daniel Toroitich arap Moi

**Age:** 77

**Passport No.:** 1

**Health:** Aged and behaves like he is senile

**Religion:** Protestant. Many Kenyans believe that he is a devil worshipper and head of the Satanic sect in the country.

**Position:** State President and Commander-in-Chief of armed forces and police. Chancellor of all Kenya's Public universities and colleges. Chairman of KANU. Teacher Number 1, Professor of Politics and economics number 1. First-class womanizer. Chairman of the Cabinet. In short, he is the supreme head of everything in Kenya. The top dog. He is above the constitution and Parliament, above the law and judiciary. He has limitless powers. He is a dictator.

**Historical Background:** A standard three graduate and a former primary school headmaster who entered politics in 1955 as a stooge of British imperialism. In 1960, he and other stooges, including Ronald Ngala, formed the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), a pro-British, pro-colonial party which unsuccessfully worked with the British imperialist occupiers to derail Kenya's independence movement. After the defeat of British colonialism in the country in 1963, Moi and other KADU traitors dissolved their quisling party and joined the ruling party, KANU, in 1964. Two years after the resignation of vice-president, Joseph Murumbi from the party and government because of his disagreement with and opposition to the regime's neo-colonial agenda, Kenyatta, through his "kitchen cabinet" advisers, appointed Moi as his vice-president and Home Affairs Minister, and for seven years he was Kenyatta's henchman. In 1978, he became president and chairman of the ruling party after the death of Jomo Kenyatta.

**Ideology:** Moi articulates no social ideology or philosophy. Nyayoism (footstep) is a mindless and senseless political slogan, but not an ideology. His worldview is shaped largely by rumormongering and disinformation his aides feed him. He hates to read, and it's difficult to persuade him to read newspapers or to watch the TV news. Politically, he has deep pathological hatred of the Gikuyu, Embu, Meru people. He has monstrously tried to destroy the political and economic power-base of central Kenya.

**Moi's Government:** A Puppet of world imperialism. Corrupt and hopelessly inefficient while a crumbling infrastructure, crime and insecurity continue to threaten the country. His main advisers are the American Ambassador and the British High Commissioner. With political and economic support of western imperialism, he has converted the police force into a gang of terrorists who attack and kill innocent citizens. Thousands of Kenyans have been killed through the "shoot-to-kill policy". Moreover, lumpenproletarian youth have been recruited into "special fascist forces" such as the infamous *Jeshi la Mzee*, KANU right-wing terrorist youth and flying murder squad. Evidently, they are contracted to terrorize, maim and kill the enemies of the regime. In the Rift Valley region, for instance, they are engaged in ethnic cleansing. Tens of Thousands of Gikuyu, Embu and Meru and other nationalities have been savagely forced out of the province—their homes burned down, property (i.e. farms, livestock, commercial businesses, etc.) looted, women sexually assaulted, and countless number of women, men and children murdered in cold blood. The people behind these monstrous crimes have never been arrested because they sleep in the same bed with the blood-sucking dictator. In the northern region, Moi's security forces are engaged in perpetual genocide.

**Mysteries of Moi's presidency:** who killed: (1) Njenga wa Karanja, a Nakuru businessman; (2) Robert Ouko, Minister of Foreign Affairs; (3) Bishop Alexander Muge; (4) Masinde Muliro; (5) Karimi wa Nduthu, Mwakenya National Coordinator; (6) Solomon Muruli, a university student activist; and (7) Samuel Ndungi, a criminal lawyer? And who does Moi blame for these grisly murders? Hooligans, tribalists, Mwakenya, rich Gikuyu, opposition parties and Marxists.

**Wealth:** his personal wealth is estimated to be between US\$5 billion and \$10 billion. Indeed he is one of the richest dictators in the world. If not looting the country's resources, where and how did he get all of this wealth? And where does he keep all of these ill-gotten monies? Abroad in foreign capitalist safes.

**The Future:** With the approach of the end of his "second term", Moi has become pathologically paranoid about leaving office and the prospect of he and his corrupt children being prosecuted for the political and economic crimes they have committed. Certainly, he has plenty to worry about.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. "There is nothing for free."
2. *Independent Kenya* was published in 1982 by Zed Press, London; it was the underground work of the December Twelve Movement. In 1985 the Movement changed its name to *Muungano wa Wazalendo wa Kukomboa Kenya* (MWAKENYA).
3. Since 1981, four publications have been banned by the repressive regime: *Voice of Kenya* in 1981; *Beyond* in 1988; *Financial Review* and *Development Agenda* in 1989.
4. The word "nyayo" simply means footprints. In 1979, it was transformed into a state ideology popularly known as "nyayoism."
5. Since the prison authorities considered me "a dangerous prisoner," I was kept in solitary confinement most of my prison days.
6. Mūngai contracted TB in Kamītī Maximum Security Prison. The prison authorities denied him medicine until he could hardly walk. Helplessly, we watched him die. It was a painful death.



General Kariba was twenty four years old when he was appointed the KLFA Field Commander. He led the fearless KLFA Eight Column which was operating in Nyiri District. His major task was to liberate Nyiri, to make the whole district a KLFA rear base. In 1954 he was betrayed by a KLFA turncoat and captured by the British enemy. He endured untold suffering with iron-willed dignity and boundless courage in the hand of the British imperialist occupiers. Because of his unshakable courage, the British murdered him in cold blood. He died a martyr.

## DEDAN KÍMAATHI: OUR SHINING HERO

In the Mau Mau war of national independence, monumental contribution was made by the unnamed hundred-thousands of workers and peasants who strongly believed in the armed struggle for the liberation of our country. Led by Stanley Mathenge, some of these patriots took to Nyandarwa mountains in June 1952 to begin a national war against the forces of occupation. In December 1952 Dedan Kímaathi joined the patriotic forces in Nyandarwa at the age of 32.

In the early period of the armed struggle, Kímaathi accompanied General Mathenge in organizing and strengthening the guerrilla army in Nyandarwa mountains, and constructing new guerrilla bases. This included Kariainī *Mbuci* (base) which became the headquarters of the Kenya Land Freedom Army (KLFA). The rules and regulations governing these camps were drafted by Kímaathi and also, because of his literary skills, it was his responsibility to maintain contacts with the Kenya War Council (KWC) in Nairobi on matters dealing with recruits, arms, ammunition, clothing and medical supplies. It was also his responsibility to contact the Mau Mau base-level leadership whose duty was to supply food and strategic intelligence information to the guerrilla army. Because of the nature of his work, Kímaathi was always on the move—visiting guerrilla camps, talking to peasants and organizing attacks against the enemy.

Five months after the Githūgī congress, as mentioned in Chapter 2, Kímaathi called a four-day congress at Mwathe, Nyandarwa, but Mathenge refused to attend, accusing Kímaathi of calling such an important conference without consulting him. In the process, Mathenge tried to use his position to sabotage the Mwathe Congress

by campaigning against it among the guerrillas, but with no success.

Mathenge's line on this issue was incorrect. For all practical purposes, Kīmaathi's motive was above personal interest; his exclusive commitment was to the liberation of the homeland and, in this connection, he was thoroughly aware that the only way to drive out the British occupiers from the country was through the unity of all Kenyans and particularly among the guerrilla fighters. An illustration of his ardent patriotism is evident in a conversation he had with Karari Njama after receiving the report on Mathenge's decision to boycott the congress. He told Karari:

Mathenge has lost a great chance of being known to many *itungati* (guerrillas).... I hope he is not suffering from megalomania. I would certainly attend any meeting he would call me to. I would like to meet him and resolve our differences... Nevertheless, I will postpone nothing due to his absence.

Similarly, he told the Kenya Parliament members later:

There is nothing wrong with Mathenge although I have never mentioned his name in this parliament before. I would not like to cause any ill feelings because he might think that I consider myself superior to him. I always like speaking well of somebody because even I am not perfect. He is still doing his work and he is a brave and active leader. Those helping me [to lead the armed struggle] are all efficient leaders and we aim at one target. However, I want to make my position very clear: My concern and responsibility are for the people of Kenya, for those comrades who have decided to sacrifice their lives for land and freedom. I have no other ambitions.

The Mwathe congress was of historical significance. Firstly, as we have learned from Chapter 2, it removed Mathenge from the KLFA leadership and elected Dedan Kīmaathi the KLFA Commander-in-Chief and the KDC chairman. Secondly, the congress identified the armed forces of the movement. Eight battalions were identified to-

gether with their areas of operations. They were:

1. Gīkūyū Iregi Army (Mūrang'a)
2. Ituma Ndemi Army (Nyīrī)
3. Kenya Inooro Army (Kiambuu and Narok)
4. MEI Mathaathi Army (Kīrīnyaga Forces)
5. Kenya Levellation Army (Special KLFA forces based in Nyīrī and Mūrang'a countryside under commanders Kariba and Kago)
6. Mbūrū Ngebo Army (Rift Valley Army)
7. The urban KLFA detachments
8. Gīkūyū and Mūmbi Trinity Army (composed of any individual or individual Kenyans who sympathized and supported the Movement one way or another).

Following the Mwathe Congress, Kīmaathi spent much of his time visiting various guerrilla camps in Nyandarwa where he discussed the progress of the struggle with the Frontline Commanders, while simultaneously, politicizing and educating the *itungati* in an attempt to bolster their fighting morale. Through letters and messengers he contacted all the KLFA forces in the country. In his letters and speeches to the Frontline Commanders as well as to the ordinary guerrilla fighters, he consistently stressed the importance of discipline, bravery and sacrifice in the struggle. At the same time, he called upon the workers and peasants to uphold patriotism as a revolutionary principle. Basically, Kīmaathi's major task from the moment he assumed the KLFA leadership was to provide the Movement with political direction. His writings, say between 1953 and 1955, testify to this fact. His other major task was to speak for the Movement, particularly to articulate its aim and goals. In this connection, he published several articles in newspapers such as the *East Africa Standard*, *Citizen*, *Habari Za Dunia*, *Baraza*, *Rhodesia and East Africa*, etc. He also authored a series of propaganda leaflets, which were widely distributed in the country, particularly in Nairobi. In October 1953 he issued a leaflet with the following message:

To all African Comrades!

General Ongutu, our Luo comrade, has been appointed to contact the leaders of all non-Gīkūyū, Embu and Merū [nationalities] such as the Kamba, Baluhya, Maasai and his own Luo [nationality] and assess the strength of their

fighting forces. Ogutu is now in Nairobi discussing the details of his mission with the Kenya War council.

Closely linked with that he wrote to individuals in Kenya and the rest of Africa, such people like Kwame Nkrumah, urging them to support the Kenyan anti-imperialist struggle. Similarly, he contacted the governments of Egypt, India, the Soviet Union and progressive individuals abroad in an attempt to build an international constituency for the Movement. For Kīmaathi the Egyptian, Indian and Soviet Union peoples were natural friends and allies of the Kenyan people in the struggle against British imperialism.

Through his tireless efforts and determination the number of guerrilla units increased rapidly and new fronts were established. In fact, by the end of 1953, Kīmaathi could boast of an army of more than 35,000 men. This included several hundreds of the urban guerrillas and peasants detachments. It would be correct to say, therefore, that by this time Kīmaathi was the most powerful national leader in Kenya. As a revolutionary leader he was greatly admired and loved by the guerrillas, workers and peasants; he was also the most hated and greatly feared by the British imperialists and their Kenyan allies. To the people of Kenya, Kīmaathi represented their indomitability and heroism; he was a symbol of their indestructible vitality; he was their hope for the future. To immortalize him the workers and peasants composed the following lines:

You whites must know that  
 You will leave this country  
 Because this is not your country  
 You came here to rob and oppress us  
 It is time you went back to Europe..  
 Then only black people will be left here  
 To enjoy the fruits of their toil  
 And rights to their land.  
 Those with hearts of steel  
 Were made by Kīmaathi.  
 He recruited General Kago  
 And then sent him to Nyandarwa  
 To fight for our liberation.

We shall destroy you, the whites,  
Because you only know robbery and violence.

Go quickly Kīmaathi  
And save us from this slavery.  
Kenya is filled with bitter tears,  
Struggling for liberation  
Remember that the white colonialists hate us,  
They hunt us day and night  
Their aim is to exterminate us all.

Between 1953 and 1954 the guerrilla army was on the offensive at all fronts. For instance, Mūrang'a and Nyīrī districts were semi-liberated and in Nairobi the KLFA forces controlled three-fourths of the city. To quote the colonial record:

During this period the strength of the [British] forces continued to lag behind the strength of Mau Mau and throughout the period the situation remained very grave... Morale of the [colonial forces] was at a low ebb, especially among the loyalist Kikuyu living in Murang'a and Nyeri. They were in a state of desperate fear of their own and their relative's lives.

Under these new developments, a series of events took place which greatly affected the armed movement. Firstly as mentioned before, China, the chief commander of the Kīrīnyaga KLFA forces was shot and captured on January 15, 1954. His capture was a deadly blow to the movement. But the situation was severely aggravated by General China's surrender and collaboration with the enemy. In this connection, he wrote a two-page letter to Kīmaathi asking him to call off the fighting and to cooperate with British imperialism. In part, he told Kīmaathi:

...I have had several talks with [the Colonial] Government Officials and I have given them a letter to send to the Governor... In the meantime, I agreed with the British Officials that it is possible to arrange a conference in

order to discuss our surrender. We agreed that four guerrilla leaders (two from Nyandarwa and two from Kīrīnyaga) should attend the surrender conference. The British Government will send its own representatives....

In conclusion, I want you to realize the reality of the situation and furthermore to understand that I am talking to you as one of the guerrilla leaders. In this case I am insisting that we accept to attend the surrender conference....

In response, Kīmaathi denounced Gen. China for his betrayal and at the same time rejected the terms of surrender he entered with the British authorities. With the same indignation, Kīmaathi dismissed the British's new constitution proposals as new imperialist maneuvers aimed at derailing the national armed struggle. He also denounced the African members of the Legislative Council and the leader of the Kenya Federation of Labour for their support of the imperialist constitution proposals. Furthermore, Kīmaathi wrote to all KLFA Frontline Commanders explaining the position of the Kenya Parliament vis-à-vis that of Gen. China and the British. The letter empowered the frontline commanders to shoot to kill anyone who tried to sell the Gen. China-British terms of surrender to the guerrillas. He urged the guerrilla army to be more vigilant against any of the enemy's new tricks and manipulations. "It is better to die", the letter concluded, "than to surrender."

Secondly, on January 27, 1954, an important meeting was held by the British loyalists in Nairobi. Chiefs, local colonial government officers, church leaders, members of the Legislative Council (Eliud Mathu and Mücohi Gīkonyo), and the former leaders of KAU (James Gīcūrū and Harry Thuku) attended the meeting. The majority of the delegates came from the central and Rift Valley parts of Kenya. There were 24 delegates in number. Nyīrī delegates were: Senior Chief Mühoya, The Rev. Charles Mühoro, and Chief Eliud Mügo. Kīambuu sent Harry Thuku, J.S. Gīcūrū, Chief Magūgū Wawerū, The Rev. Wanyoike Kamawe, Councilor Mbīra, Chief Kībathi Gītangu, The Rev. William Njoroge, Anon Samuel Nguru, Div. Chief Josiah Njonjo and E.W. Mathu. Mūrang'a traitors were: Ex-Senior Chief Njiiri Karanja, Chief Ignatio Mūrai, The Rev. Elijah Gachanja, Chief Samuel Gīthu and Mücohi Gīkonyo; Embu sent

two delegates: Chief Stephen Ngigī and Chief Richard Gīthae. The quislings from the Rift Valley Province were: Parmenas Kīritū, Chief Chrysostom Kīhagi, J.F.G. Kanya and Chief Zedekiah Wambūgū. Merū and Kamba were represented by white District Officers. Other provinces sent their white and black representatives. L.S.B. Leakey and Ian Henderson played a key role at the meeting as the colonial government interpreters and advisers.

The meeting was anti-Mau Mau Movement and was called to find ways to halt the advance of the KLFA guerrillas. Most of the traitors at the meeting condemned Mau Mau as the greatest enemy of the Kenyan people. They claimed that they had witnessed how the Mau Mau slaughter people—"drink their blood and eat their flesh." They accused the movement of burning people's houses and schools, destroying their crops and stealing their cattle and goats. Some said that Mau Mau patriots had slowed down the country's political and economic progress and were taking money from the peasants for their own use.

Others claimed that the Mau Mau militant agitation caused the KAU leaders to be anti-government and that Mau Mau were taking young men into the forest to live like beasts, whilst deceiving them that they were fighting for independence. These traitors declared further that independence would not be attained unless Africans, Europeans and Asians united to demand for it. That for anti-Christian elements (Mau Mau) to demand independence alone would not succeed and would lead the country to darkness and death.

Those who fight against Mau Mau, the traitors stated, would be remembered for generations to come for their good services to British imperialism, while Mau Mau leaders and their followers would forever be condemned by forthcoming generations for their "terrorist" and evil activities against the country. They claimed that "Mau Mau terrorists" and the leaders of KAU would not be allowed to return to their homes even after independence. The British colonial regime would keep them in detention until they die.

The meeting went on for two days after which resolutions were passed urging the colonial regime to take stern steps against the Mau Mau Movement and its supporters. The resolutions were printed on a four-page document entitled *Mūgambo wa Atongoria* (the Voice of the Leaders), and was circulated all over Kenya, particularly in central Kenya, the Rift Valley and in the concentration camps where

those suspected of being Mau Mau were held.

A week after this meeting, Field Marshall Dedan Kīmaathi called an emergency meeting of the guerrillas in Nyandarwa to denounce these native traitors and their imperialist masters and above all, to state clearly the position of the armed movement. The conference was attended by thousands of Mau Mau guerrillas. Kīmaathi spoke last:

Just a week ago, dear comrades, an anti-Mau Mau meeting was held in Nairobi. It was attended by stooges of imperialism of central Kenya and the Rift Valley—chiefs, Christian church leaders, members of the Legislative Council, local government officers, and the two former leaders of KAU—James Gīcūrū and Harry Thuku. The Kenya Chief Native commissioner, a white colonialist, was the chairman of the meeting. The main aim of the meeting, comrades, was to sabotage our armed resistance with the aim of destroying it completely. Let me now tell you what these traitors decided at that meeting. We have their document here and the KLFA special committee has thoroughly studied it and made the following criticisms.

1. These traitors said at the meeting that they are the leaders of central Kenya. In the first place, nobody appointed them to be leaders of our people; in the second place, our people would not allow the traitors to be their leaders. Comrades, we know no other leaders in Kenya, but those who are fighting and dying for the liberation of this country. (Loud applause)

2. The traitors said that Mau Mau is the enemy of the Kenyan people and that it murders them, drinks their blood and eats their flesh. Now we all know what kind of people these are—they are outright traitors, the mortal and immediate enemies of our Movement and country. Their aim is to try to please their colonial masters so that they can get some crumbs. They can do anything, even sell their own mothers for material wealth. They are worthless people. (Applause)

Comrades, you know very clearly that even a child would not agree to drink human blood or eat human flesh. You know that the meat and blood we use in our oathing ceremony comes from animals. We have our order—even our sacred tradition makes it clear

on this —that human bloodstained clothing cannot be worn. If we cannot wear clothes touched by human blood, comrades, how can we be able to swallow human blood, to eat human flesh? We are not cannibalistic. All these nasty allegations, comrades, are lies. But in order to fight these colonial propaganda, it is up to us, comrades, to let the truth be known to the entire nation and to the world at large. Our task is to make sure that our patriotic propaganda is carried on in every region of our country in a language that the masses of our people can easily understand. (Applause)

3. They have said that we burn people's houses and schools, and that we destroy crops in the fields. How ridiculous these allegations are! We, Kenya Land and Freedom Army (KLFA), don't burn or destroy the property of our people. Our order is very clear: we burn and destroy the enemy's property. Every comrade here knows who our friend is and who our enemy is. Our enemy is the British colonialists and their Kenyan collaborators—those Kenyans who have decided to side with colonialism against our people. (Applause)

4. They have accused us of preventing and refusing the children to go to school, and of burning most of the schools in central Kenya. Comrades, which schools have we burnt down? Let them list them. It is not us who have burnt down schools. It is not us who have closed down the schools and exterminated the students; it is the colonialist regime that has burnt down most of the schools and exterminated the students. For instance, this brutal regime has burnt down more than three hundred independent schools, depriving sixty-two thousand children of their schooling. Where do these students now learn, comrades? And where is the equipment, which was removed from these schools? They stole them, comrades. Further, who ordered the closure of Kenya Teachers College and arrested both teachers and students? It is the same forces of colonialism. In addition to that, comrades, it is true that the children of parents who are actively involved in armed struggle have been expelled from schools through an act of the Legislative Council which was passed recently. But what is more painful is that this anti-Kenyan act had the support of the present African members of the Legislative council and the pro-imperialist Kenya Federation of Labour, which is led by the quisling Tom Mboya. By supporting this act these traitors in

the legislative council and in the labor movement have committed an act of treason against our people. They will pay with their lives. (Thunderous applause).

Comrades, we are not the ones preventing the children from going to school; it is the foreign regime whose aim is known to all of us. These colonialists came to our country to enslave us, to steal our land and to exterminate us as well. (Applause)

No, we can never do such things, comrades. Ours is a people's army whose aim is to free the country and our people from these foreign monsters. (Applause)

5. They said that Mau Mau has blocked the wealth and trade of our country. But which one of the Mau Mau cadres issues business licenses? Which one of the Mau Mau leaders distributes jobs, profits or land in this country? Who owns all these big businesses, these large plantations in the country? Jobs, land and business are in the hands of foreigners who continue to exploit the Kenyan masses. These traitors are too blind to know that the colonial government is solely responsible for the present situation in the country. (Applause)

6. The traitors claimed that we deprive people of their land. But think carefully comrades, which of the Mau Mau cadres has taken a piece of land belonging to the people? It was the colonialists, these white settlers, who took our land and reduced us to a state of scum in our own country. Comrades, this is the very reason we are in the forest today fighting. You can see for yourselves, how foolish, how brainwashed these lackeys of imperialism are. The white settlers who grabbed our land, continue to rape, loot and kill our people are the same people who put together that meeting the traitors proudly attended and pledged themselves to fight against our liberation movement. After we liberate our country we shall round up these quislings and charge them with treason. (Loud Applause)

7. They also accused us of collecting funds by force from the peasants which they have saved through selling their grain. Comrades, this accusation is ridiculous because as you know, the colonial regime has refused our people to plant maize in central Kenya and has closed down public markets in the region. Where then do the peasants grow maize which they are supposed to be selling—in their

stomachs? And why do you think, comrades, this inhuman regime has prohibited our people to grow maize? Their aim, comrades, is to starve our people so that they would refuse to support the armed struggle, but they cannot and will not succeed in cutting the resistance movement off from our people. Ours is a people's revolutionary movement; it has the support of the overwhelming majority of Kenyans. (Applause)

8. The traitors declared that there would be no African independence, that all races in our country had to fight together for it. But then, may we ask, why didn't India, which regained her independence not too long ago, accept an Indian-British government? Or, when Britain herself was under Roman rule, why didn't the British agree to a coalition government, instead of fighting for complete independence? Our country does not belong to fools and traitors. It belongs to the Kenyan people, who have now taken arms to liberate the country from foreign invaders. Comrades, let me make this point very clear: there is not and cannot be any peaceful coexistence between our people and the colonial oppressors. The basic aim of Mau Mau and its armed force is to get rid of colonial domination and to bring peace and freedom on this beautiful land we love. And that is why I want to stress that those Kenyans who attended that meeting are nothing more but stooges.

They have sold our country and people to British imperialism. Their argument that there will never be an African independence is sheer nonsense. We have no doubt in our mind that KLFA will liberate this country and our people will be free again. In the name of our movement and our people, I, Kīmaathi wa Waciūri, urge you, comrades, to fight to the last man, to the last drop of our blood—fight until our country and our people are free from this monster of colonialism and its African lackeys. Ours, dear comrades, is a people's war; it is a just war. We cannot be defeated. (Thunderous applause)

9. These traitors also claimed that the people who fight against our liberation Movement will be remembered forever by our people. Who will remember the traitors? Perhaps their friends, the colonialists, will remember them, but not our people. Our history will be the history of those patriotic Kenyans who, before us, fought

and died for the liberation of this country. Our people, our history, will only remember and honor those of us who are now fighting and dying for our country's freedom. We shall be remembered and respected forever when our country regains its liberty. Generation after generation will forever celebrate the heroic deaths of those Mau Mau patriots who sacrificed their dear lives for our fatherland. Schools and universities of our country shall carry in their halls and libraries, portraits, statues and monuments of our great heroes. Those of the colonialists and their stooges, which stand there now, shall be pulled down. Those Kenyan traitors given British medals for their treacherous acts against our people shall be rounded up and brought before a revolutionary court. We know each and everyone of them. We have their names. (Thunderous Applause)

Those of us who will be alive after the liberation will be respected and honored by the Kenyan masses for our heroic work courageously carried out in the name of our country. Do not think, comrades, that we shall all die in these mountains and that none will remain to narrate our revolutionary heroism to the Kenyan masses at a time when they shall be free to applaud them. Most of us will be there, but even if we all die our people will never forget us. (Loud applause)

With our blood, comrades, we have written a glorious chapter in history that will never be forgotten by our people and the progressive people of the world. (Thunderous applause)

Go well, comrades. Remember always that we shall never leave these forests, these mountains, until our country is free. It is better to die on our feet than to live on our knees. (Thunderous applause)

The guerrillas left the meeting singing—when our Kīmaathi ascended/ into the mountains alone/he asked for strength and courage/To decisively defeat the colonialists...

Thirdly, the KLFA leadership, as mentioned earlier, called the second Congress at Karathi, Nyandarwa in February 1954 which approved the construction of a higher political institution, Kenya Parliament (KP) with Kīmaathi as its President and the spokesman of the entire armed movement. Meanwhile the contradictions between the KP leadership and the Mathenge splittist group were deepening. Unity with the Mathenge group was several times attempted

by the KP leadership but without success. In essence, Mathenge's decision to create a schism within the armed struggle was an unforgivable crime; it caused the Movement an irreparable damage. Closely connected with that after the failures of General China's attempt to convene surrender talks, the enemy intensified its offensive. Bombs, rockets and tanks were used against the patriotic forces in Nyandarwa and Kīrīnyaga. More British troops and European mercenaries were flown in. In the urban centers thousands of workers and their families were brutally tortured, arrested and detained; some of them were killed outright. Fascist brutalization of the peasants in the countryside, particularly in the Rift Valley and central Kenya, became commonplace. But owing to our people's iron-determination the enemy failed to halt the march of history.

In the meantime, after the Karathi congress, Kīmaathi worked hard to consolidate the leadership. He toured all the major guerrilla camps in Nyandarwa and contacted the Kīrīnyaga Frontline Commanders in order to explain the political significance of the new development in the Movement. In his speeches and writings, he consistently urged the guerrillas and the broad masses to spare no efforts to expel the British from the country. Explaining the KP policy on land, he said:

Once we have won this war and regained our freedom and independence, the land which now is being occupied by the European settlers will be distributed to our people—the landless, the poor, the squatters and those of us who are fighting and dying in these forests and mountains. Our Government will make sure that all the stolen land is returned to the owners. The European settlers will be expelled from our country and the Kenyan traitors will be arrested to answer for all the crimes and atrocities they have committed against the people.

At the same time he constantly continued to expose the inhuman brutalities of British imperialism and to denounce the national traitors. In a letter he sent to Chief Mūhoya, the puppet of British imperialism, he said:

I really pity all of you who are collaborating with the British—the enemy of our country. Being surrounded by trenches, daily parades and subjugated to rigid fascist orders, you suffer more than we who are championing the people's cause. But why suffer for crumbs? How terrible to die as a traitor!

The letter to Salehe Kibwana of Tanzania, he stated:

It is not true, as the British and their local supporters are [preaching] that we are against civilization, that our aims are to take our people back to ancient times. Our fighting is for the return of our stolen land and freedom. . . We are not savages or murderers as the enemy continues to propagate. We know what we are doing: and we know what is best for our people and country.

In spite of Kīmaathi's revolutionary commitment, several factors hampered and weakened his determination and patriotic effort. Firstly, the betrayal by General China and the creation of schism within the armed movement by the Mathenge splittist group helped the enemy to infiltrate the guerrilla army, thus paralyzing the core leadership of the Movement. Secondly, wearing a patriotic garb, the urban petty-bourgeois leadership under Tom Mboya openly came out in support of the constitutional methods of struggle, thus siding with British imperialism against the people and their patriotic army. In fact, Anglo-American interests tactically created Mboya's Kenya Federation of Labour for this purpose. Thirdly, Kīmaathi, as mentioned before, was shot and captured by the enemy on October 20, 1956. Despite the bestial torture he underwent in the enemy's gaol, he did not ask for mercy nor did he ever contemplate betraying the homeland in order to preserve his life. He saw his death as part of something natural in the revolutionary process. He once wrote to a guerrilla comrade: "If we all die the future generation will continue with the struggle until our country is free and independent." Similarly, he told another comrade: "Work very hard for the people without fearing death; we will die one day. Besides, to die for one's country is to live forever." Kīmaathi was not without weaknesses, but from reading his writings and studying his revolutionary activi-

ties, few Kenyans can doubt his dedication and commitment to the liberation of the Kenyan people and the homeland.

He entered history as a martyr. In the holy name of democracy and Christian civilization, Kimathi was "legally" lynched by the imperialists on February 18, 1957. But he lives on in the continuing struggle of our people for democracy and social justice.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS**

1. *The Kimathi Papers*. Underground Mau Mau Literature captured by the British in Nyandarwa, 1954. Copies can be found in the Kenya National Archives.
2. *Mugambo wa Atongoria*. 1954; Copies can be found in the Kenya National Archives and in the Mau Mau Research Center, Mükürweini wa Nyagathanga, Mürang'a, Kenya.
3. Maina wa Kinyatti, *Thunder From the Mountains* (1980) and *Kenya's Freedom Struggle* (1986), Zed Books, London. *Mwaki Utangihoreka*, Mau Mau Research Center, Nairobi: 1997.
4. Barnett and Njama, *Mau Mau From Within*, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1966.
5. Philosophy and Social Action, vol. 8 (2), published by Dhirendra Sharma, New Delhi: April-May-June 1982.



October 20, 1957 Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi shot and captured by the British imperialist force. After refusing to betray the struggle and the people of Kenya, he was executed by the British occupiers on February 18, 1957 at 11.30p.m. and buried in an unmarked grave at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison where his remains are still interred. Why should we allow a great patriot to remain buried in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison after he fought so courageously and patriotically against the British Imperialist occupiers?

## OUR HISTORY SHOULD NOT BE DISTORTED

The Mau Mau Movement has been attacked and interpreted from different angles and by different groups and individuals. Occasionally, attacks and criticisms of the Movement are heard from certain members of the Kenya National Assembly. Some even proudly and loudly boast how courageously they fought Mau Mau in the pay of British imperialism. For instance, when Bildad Kaggia insisted in the National Assembly in 1964 that the KANU government should honor the Mau Mau freedom fighters because of their monumental contribution to national independence, Ole Tiptip, a Cabinet Minister responded: “I believe we obtained our independence in a very nice way at the instigation of the British Government, but not through fighting in the forest.” And in 1991, the KANU chairman for Nakuru district, Wilson Leitich, boldly announced: “We shall take and rape your wives, you Kikuyus, like we did during the Emergency [period of the war of independence], if you follow multiparty supporters. During my interview with a former Mau Mau guerrilla, Karuku wa Kīmani, he asked: “Why should they (members of Parliament) continue to condemn Mau Mau—a movement which fought for their rights to be in that ‘House’ they call Parliament? Was it a crime to fight for our land and our country’s independence?”<sup>1</sup> Another line which has been taken by Kenyatta and KANU is to urge the people to forget Mau Mau. To quote Ngūgī Kabiro: “We are told to forget the past. But I, for one, fail to understand why we should so easily forget the great suffering endured by our people in their struggle for land and freedom.”<sup>2</sup> Similarly Mathu states:

.... I should like to remind those African leaders who now condemn Mau Mau and tell us to forget our past struggles and suffering, that their present positions of

power in the Legislative Council and elsewhere would not have been realized except for our sacrifices. I would also warn them that we did not make these sacrifices just to have Africans step into the shoes of former European masters.<sup>3</sup>

Basically, there are three interpretations of the Mau Mau Movement. The first interpretation is based on the imperialist and Christian School of thought. The second one is represented by the University of Nairobi School of Thought; and the third one stems from a chauvinist clique in central Kenya. I shall comment on each of these:

### **The Imperialist and Christian School of Thought**

According to this school of thought, which is well articulated by L.S.B. Leakey,<sup>4</sup> F.D. Corfield, Fred Majdalany, Dennis Holman, Ione Leigh, Robert Ruark and many leaders of the Christian church, Mau Mau was:

- A barbarous and atavistic organization
- An anti-white tribal cult whose leaders planned to turn Kenya into a land of darkness and death. A product of primitive Gikuyu forest mentality
- An advanced form of Gikuyu insanity
- Anti-Christianity and anti-western civilization
- A product of the Gikuyu people's failures to adapt to the demands of western civilization
- A terrorist movement whose aim was the drinking of human blood
- Communist subversive movement,<sup>5</sup> etc.

Broadly speaking, the Christian church collaborated fully with British imperialism in killing hundreds of thousands of our compatriots. It was the main aim of the Christian church leaders to see that our patriotic struggle was crushed. Their anti-Mau Mau stance is well articulated by George Dennis in his speech published in St. Andrew Journal (Nairobi, May 1954). The following is an extract:

... I declare to you by the recorded word of God, that Christ himself said, "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me," and on that eternal word I take my stand and invite you now to do the same for no matter the horror and shocking unthinkable cruelty, and the abysmal cataclysm that Mau Mau has wrought in our midst, it is doomed, yes, it is doomed, and I say by the word of the overcoming Christ who declared He had the keys of Hell and of death, *It is doomed*, and let all the powers of evil know and tremble at His word. Well may we of St. Andrew's pray with all our hearts as our forefathers did in the hills and glens of auld Scotland when they cried to God in the day of their calamity and anguish, "God of our fathers be the God of their succeeding race," then not only Kenya, but all Africa and her children shall flourish for Mau Mau shall be cast into the bottomless pit.

Make no Mistake, when every terrorist has surrendered, or been captured or slain, our task of building up this colony on a sure and firm foundation must begin, it is the rent we must pay for living here, so let us determine to do it wholeheartedly, in the spirit of Blake when he wrote— "I will not cease from mental strife, nor shall my sword sleep in mine hand," *till we have built Jerusalem, in Kenya's Green and Pleasant Land.*

The imperialist and Christian school of thought is easily understood because it is a straightforward racist position. One sees their point since they were the enemy forces Mau Mau was determined to overthrow. To expect them to eulogize the victory of their slaves is like expecting Henry Kissinger to eulogize the victory of the Vietnamese people over American imperialism in 1975. What these enemies of Kenyans were trying to accomplish was to destroy the real essence of our national movement. Their ulterior motive was one: to try to justify their mission as "agents of world civilization" in our country in order to cover their exploitation and brutal oppression of the Kenyan people. This reasoning, which is racist in nature, failed to explain the fundamental contradictions which brought the Mau Mau to its birth. And it can not erase in our history the monumental task the Kenyan people took up for their national liberation. It is obvious that

the colonialists and their agents, the Christian Church, were not in our country for humanitarian purposes. They came for one underlined aim: to enslave and exploit Kenyans for their own stomachs.

Essentially, the Christians, particularly the more backward African Christians, condemned Mau Mau as an anti-Christian, anti-African, terrorist and cannibalistic movement. Yes, it is true that Mau Mau killed a lot of Africans in comparison to the number of Europeans it killed. But the fundamental question is: what sorts of people were killed? They were outright traitors and colonial collaborators who owed Kenyans many blood debts and were bitterly hated and opposed by them. In a movement, which involves thousands and thousands of people, the masses would not be able to heighten their political consciousness if it allows traitors and reactionary intellectuals or religious agents to spread their pro-imperialist propaganda freely among the people. If these elements were not wiped out quickly they would sabotage the people's movement and eventually destroy it. Truly, if Mau Mau did not act immediately to wipe out most of the traitors the Kenyan masses could not have supported it nor could they have allowed its presence in their midst. In its methods of struggle Mau Mau was able, by stages, to distinguish between the enemy and the friend. In fact, it seems to be the same that too many selfish and opportunist elements were left in the Movement only to subsequently derail and betray it.

### **The University of Nairobi School of Thought**

In their efforts to misrepresent and distort the fundamental aim of Mau Mau and to deny the Movement its national character, some University of Nairobi historians and other academics use arguments essentially similar to the imperialist and Christian school of thought. That Mau Mau was:

- a primitive Gĩkũyũ movement
- a Gĩkũyũ chauvinistic and tribalist organization
- Gĩkũyũ nationalism as opposed to Kenyan nationalism and that it was not a national movement because:
- all the Mau Mau symbols and songs were Gĩkũyũ
- other nationalities did not take part or support the movement

-it did not spread beyond central Kenya  
-oathing was typically Gikuyu, Embu and Meru, etc.

Perhaps to be more specific we should quote the two leading anti-Mau Mau academics—William R. Ocheing<sup>6</sup> and B.E. Kipkorir. William Ochieng<sup>7</sup> argues that:

Mau Mau was definitely not a nationalist movement... [it] had no nationalist programme... [further] the Central Committee that managed the Mau Mau Movement contained representatives from Murang'a, Nyeri, Embu, Meru and Machakos... It is therefore important to correctly evaluate Mau Mau as a primarily Kikuyu affair.<sup>6</sup>

In the same vein B.E. Kipkorir argues that since Mau Mau did not distribute its political programme nationwide it was therefore not a nationalist movement. He writes sarcastically:

Kaggia has put forward the view that to steal from a European a cow, in the cause was 'nationalist'... But he fails to show that Mau Mau had a programme for national leadership, which could have been truly national.<sup>7</sup>

Again according to Kipkorir, Mau Mau did not have *any support* outside central Kenya because it was a tribal movement. We quote:

It is not therefore surprising that hardly anyone, outside central Kenya, voiced sympathy or support for Mau Mau...<sup>8</sup>

In a somewhat similar vein, Professor Ogot has strongly argued that Mau Mau songs express Gikuyu nationalism as opposed to Kenyan nationalism. In a paper read to the 1976 Conference of the Historical Association of Kenya, he wrote: "In conclusion, I would like to state that what emerges from a study of these hymns is a strong sense of Kikuyu nationalism as opposed to Kenya African nationalism."<sup>9</sup> Interestingly, Ogot, like L.S.B. Leakey, calls Mau Mau freedom songs, "hymns."

For this University of Nairobi school of thought to label and condemn Mau Mau as a “chauvinist and tribalist movement” is not enough to convince anyone because the reasons it gives do not explain the historical and social contradictions, which brought about its birth and development. Moreover, it fails to understand that although the Mau Mau Movement was perhaps different in form in comparison with other Third World national movements, it was not different in political content. Mau Mau was a struggle similar to those then being waged by the colonized peoples all over the Third World. Further it is important to really understand that the Kenyan people did not choose the road of armed struggle because they loved to shed human blood, but because they came to the conclusion, as we have explained earlier, that it was the only effective way to dethrone British colonialism, win independence and retain their stolen land. Philip Bolsover pointed out in May 1953:

What is going on in Kenya today is a great liberation movement of the African Movement of the African people, and the struggle is being waged by the only methods left open to them as a result of the violence and suppression exercised by the British imperialists.<sup>10</sup>

There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that the organizers of Mau Mau and those who went to the forests to wage war viewed Mau Mau as a countrywide movement whose aim was to fight for national independence. Mathu writes:

Our principal aim was to forge an ironclad unity among the people of central Kenya—and all other Africans whose support could be won—so that we might take action as a single body to achieve our national objectives.<sup>11</sup>

In sum, it is not a coincident that the university academics who take an anti-Mau Mau line in their writings have been rewarded by the Moi-KANU dictatorship with key positions in government. What then is the difference between these rightwing academic opportunists and the former *hūmungaati* traitors?

### **The Chauvinist Interpretation**

The third interpretation of the Mau Mau Movement is a purely chauvinist one. Simply, it goes like this: "We Gikuyu, Embu and Meru fought and died for this independence; therefore, we bought it with our blood. All positions of privilege, power and wealth must be occupied by us!" This is the other side of the argument that the University of Nairobi school of thought is pushing.

Besides denying the Mau Mau Movement its national character, this chauvinist group has another dangerous ulterior motive, and that is: to use the revolutionary prestige of Mau Mau as a tool to monopolize national leadership, and foremost, to use this prestige as an instrument to enrich themselves.<sup>12</sup> Ironically, those who chauvinistically praise Mau Mau now are largely the same elements—the *hūmungaati* and *tai-tai* elements—branded time and time again as traitors by Dedan Kimaathi. Their chauvinist outlook is well portrayed in *The Trial of Dedan Kimaathi*, a play by Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Mícere Mügo. It is a struggle between Kimaathi and these chauvinists who use Mau Mau heroism as a tool to divide Kenyans for their selfish ends. We quote:

Politician: We have been given two alternatives. We can get independence, province by province. Majimboism. As a token of their goodwill, they have now allowed District and Provincial Political Parties. Independence for Central Province. After all, it is we Gikuyu, Embu and Meru who really fought for *Uhuru*.

Kimaathi: Would you too call the war for national liberation a regional Movement? What has colonialism done to your thinking? Hear me. Kenya is one indivisible whole. The cause we fight for is larger than provinces; it shatters ethnic barriers. It is a whole people's cause...

Similarly Mathu observes:

Remembering how many of these leaders abandoned us during the revolution, I am suspicious of those who now

claim to speak in our name. Are they not abandoning us again in their quest for personal power and wealth? The vast majority of Africans remain very poor. Are the masses of people simply to become the slaves of a handful of wealthy Black men?<sup>13</sup>

There are really two distinct, although related, charges here. The first is that the Movement was based largely in central Kenya. The second is that the Movement was ethnically exclusive, that it was "tribalist." We must immediately concede the first point. It was in central Kenya that British colonialism created the conditions for a modern nationalist movement. Wholesale land seizures, large single-crop plantations, railroad towns like Nairobi, and the railroad itself meant the formation of a class of workers whose traditional links with land and kin had been disrupted. These workers, both urban and rural, were in a position to see the struggle against colonialism from a new, non-ethnic perspective. This was especially true for those who had fought in World War 2, met soldiers from other colonies—as well as the English working class—and gotten an idea of the scope and intent of Britain's empire. All these preconditions, both economic and human, were concentrated in central Kenya. One can ask: Where in the world has a self-sustaining revolutionary movement sprung up spontaneously and simultaneously throughout a country? Why should our national struggle be condemned and damned as an ethnic insurrection because of its unique development?

The mere fact of the Movement being located mainly in central Kenya does not answer the question of its character. But it certainly raises that question, and for participants as well as historians. The kinship ties of urban Kenyans had not been wholly severed and they were a useful means of spreading the movement, especially back in the villages. Allegiance was secured by a traditional-style oath before *Gikūyū na Mumbi*. This created a definite ambiguity in the people's understanding of the Movement's aims and explains why some felt they were participating in an ethnic uprising. Mathu remembers: "The oath was disliked by non-Kikuyu. Many of us felt that a more general, flexible oath was necessary."<sup>14</sup> Mathu also recalls an incident in which a Luo volunteer was refused because of his ethnic background. But it is important to see that Mathu and others were constantly fighting this narrow conception with a larger

one. Karari Njama worried about the same counter-tendencies which he, like Mathu, saw in Mau Mau. But he elected to join because he concluded that they were not the principal aspect: "I believe it was an all-Kenya African national movement and not a tribal one."<sup>15</sup>

All revolutionary movements do internal education to explain their views to the membership. The Mau Mau leadership understood the need to clarify the Movement's ends, to the larger world as well as to its own members. And it means that these clarifications offer us the best explanation of what the Movement was about. That is why those who want to interpret Mau Mau as a regional or tribal insurrection should seriously examine the documents and speeches, now available, of Dedan Kīmaathi, who was the chief architect of the Movement.

If colour discrimination continues in Kenya, who will stop subversive action, for the Africans has eyes, ears and brains? It is better to die than to live in distress. Why confine distress to the soul?<sup>16</sup>

Giving the reason why the Kenyan people have taken the road of armed struggle, he declared:

We resort to armed struggle simply because there is no other alternative left to us, because our people are exploited, oppressed, plundered, tortured...<sup>17</sup>

From 1952 to the middle of 1956, as mentioned earlier, Kīmaathi made genuine efforts to provide the ideological leadership of the resistance in the forests. He toured and visited various guerrilla units explaining the direction and aim of the Movement. He also called the Mau Mau "Kenya Parliament" meeting regularly to review and analyze the war situation and more importantly to discuss the future of a Kenya to come. At one of those meetings Kīmaathi is reported to have replied to the imperialist propaganda:

I do not lead terrorists, but I lead Africans who want their self-government. My people want to live in a better world than they met when they were born. I lead them because

God never created any nation to be ruled by another forever.

Further, in a letter he wrote to Fenner Brockway<sup>17</sup>, Kīmaathi argued:

We are not fighting for an everlasting hatred but are creating a true and real brotherhood between white and blacks so that we may be regarded as people and as human beings who can do each and everything.

The ideological position of the Movement is articulated clearly in a *Document* Kīmaathi published in October 1953 followed by letters he sent abroad to different individuals in defense of the Mau Mau Movement. The document consists of 79 articles. Copies of the Document were sent to the Colonial Office in London, the Indian Government, the Government of Egypt, the United Nations, Mbiyū wa Koinange in London, Fenner Brockway, George Padmore, the executive member of the Pan-African Congress in London, President Eisenhower of the United States, George Malenkov of the Soviet Union, the French Government, and Kwame Nkrumah. The following extracts from the document clearly show that Mau Mau was a national Movement and part of a worldwide movement against imperialism and against exploitation by capital. The Document states:

We want an African self-government in Kenya now.

We reject the foreign laws in Kenya for they were not made for Kenya and are not righteous.

We reject to be called terrorists when demanding our people's rights.

Our real fight is not against the white color but is against the system carried on by the white rulers.

Fighting for our stolen land and our independence is not a crime but a revolutionary duty.

Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom. Only when we achieve our independence can our people have genuine peace.

We reject a foreign Attorney-General in Kenya for he deals with appearances more than righteousness.

We reject to be called Mau Mau. We are Kenya Land Freedom Army (KLFA).

We reject colonization in Kenya for being in that state we are turned into slaves and beggars.

Our people will chase away the foreign exploiters, wipe out the traitors and establish an independent government of the Kenyan people....

After going through Kīmaathi's Document one cannot hold the view that Mau Mau was "a tribal and atavist insurrection" or a "Gīkūyū chauvinist movement" unless one has *certain motives* other than a genuine search for truth.

As a matter of fact, D.P. Singh writes, "throughout Kīmaathi's writings and speeches, and in the reports of the meetings held by guerrillas, there is a consistent emphasis on the need for justice, on the possibility of reconciliation, and on the right to self-government."<sup>18</sup> In connection with that, Mau Mau songs and poetry express succinctly the political aims of the Movement. A quick perusal of extracts from some of these songs will, like Kīmaathi's writings, show the Mau Mau was a national Movement. We will start with the most well-known one entitled, *Rwimbo rwa Afrika* ("Africa Song"):

God gave to the Black people  
This land of Africa  
Praise *Mwene Nyaga*  
For his blessing.

We will continue in our praises  
Of the land of Africa  
From North to South

After much suffering  
The country of Egypt  
Was delivered from bondage  
And received its freedom.

Abyssinia (Ethiopia) saw the light  
Shining down from the North

Her people struggled mightily  
And rescued themselves from the mire.

If you look around the whole of Kenya  
It is only a river of blood  
For we have one single purpose:  
To lay hold of Kenya's freedom.

Listen to the painful sobbing  
Of our brothers in South Africa  
Where they are being oppressed  
By the Boer oppressors.

We shall greatly rejoice  
In the unity of all the black People  
Let us create in our unity  
A united states of all Africa.

The song expresses Mau Mau's international solidarity with the people of Africa against imperialism and colonialism. It also calls for a creation of a Pan African states of Africa.

Since Mau Mau was fighting foreign exploiters and their friends in our country, the song below, *Inyuū Nyakeerū Mūrī Ageni Būrūri Ūyū Witū* (You White People are Foreigners in Our Country), brings out this point clearly:

You white people are foreigners in our country  
You brought slavery and exploitation in our country  
Now leave our country.

I will fight our enemy  
I will fight our enemy  
Until our country is free.

And you traitors who sell us  
To the white oppressors  
You must realize that  
We will expel the white oppressors  
From this land

Then you will pay  
For your treacherous act  
With your lives.

All along the struggle, as we have mentioned elsewhere, Kīmaathi consistently continued to stress the justice of the struggle. This is reflected in the following song entitled. *Ndirī na Kīha No Ngūthiī* (I Am Not Afraid I Must Go):

When the enemy comes  
I will not be afraid  
I will wipe him out  
Because I am fighting for justice

Understanding of the violent nature of imperialism and its racist policy is clearly expressed in a song entitled, *Rwīmbo Rwa Kīmaathi* (The Song of Kīmaathi):

We are tormented  
Because we are Black  
And we are not their kind  
But with God in us  
We will defeat them [the colonialists].

In conclusion, it is evident that the true “political kernel” of the Mau Mau Movement has up to now, not been cracked largely because of a failure by Kenyan historians to examine crucial internal ideological struggles within that organization and particularly the splits and subsequent shifts in internal KAU alliances just before 1952, the historic regrouping of the disenchanted young militants into the Mau Mau, the organization and growth of the ensuing armed struggle, their eventual dispersal, and most significantly, their silencing and, in many cases, the betrayal of their political goals after 1960. It is evident, further, that instead of attempting to crack this “kernel” with objective investigation, there are efforts to hide even that part of Mau Mau history which is already amply documented. The various schools of thought responsible for this are, in my view, not only doing great intellectual disservice to Kenyans, but are also playing role in complete defiance of facts.

It is evident that resistance movements since the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed from lower to higher levels of organization and political awareness culminating in the Mau Mau armed confrontation. Mau Mau, therefore, was the peak of African anti-colonial politics in Kenya. However, weaknesses in organization all along, especially the failure to weed out counter-tendencies and greedy opportunists who later liquidated the struggle at tremendous cost, are also quite evident.

Plentiful information already exists for the collecting. (It is true that perhaps-critical documents lie hidden in the Kenya national archives in an effort by the KANU regime to prevent the completion of this glorious chapter of our national history.) But there are people still alive with useful documentary evidence, which is in stark opposition to some current hypotheses. I have endeavored to bring out some of this new information, through interviews and documents. I am hopeful that this will help realign the Mau Mau debate more correctly and at least lay to rest the more blatant anti-Mau Mau myths and the "revised" positions. This treatment in no way exhausts the sources of information. It is but the beginning of what necessarily must be a long discussion of this important chapter of Kenya's history.

My investigations show doubtlessly that the Mau Mau Movement answered an urgent desire of the Kenyan peasantry and workers for land redistribution and that on strategic differences its leadership split from moderate and conservative KAU, that Kīmaathi and the Kenya Defence Council were clear about the need for armed struggle and its Kenya-wide nature. That Mau Mau had serious organizational weaknesses is also made clear by the ease with which it was cut off from the urban and rural population around 1955 after three years of spectacular success and more so by their utter failure to regroup after 1960 as a political force that could not be betrayed or sold out.

This latter weakness gave Kenyatta and KANU an opportunity to betray national independence. Political weaknesses always have a very high cost.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Interview with the author.
2. Ngūgī Kabiro, *The Man in the Middle*, (Richmond, British Columbia: LSM Information Center, 1973) p. 75.
3. Mathu, p. 75.
4. L.S.B. Leakey was working as an intelligence officer in the C.I.D. during the Mau Mau war of national liberation. His brother, who was killed by Mau Mau in October 1954, was a leading Kenya settler spokesman.
5. For detailed information see *The Psychology of Mau Mau* by J.C. Corothers; *Historical Survey of the Origins and Growth of Mau Mau* by F.D. Corfield; *Mau Mau and Kikuyu* by L.S. B. Leakey; *In the Shadow of Mau Mau* by Lone Leigh; *Bwana Drum* by D. Holman; *State of Emergency* by Fred Majdalany; *Uhuru* by Robert Ruark, etc.
6. William Ochieng', "Review of Kaggia's Roots of Freedom 1921-1963" in *Kenya Historical Review*, Vol. 4, No.1 (1976) p. 140-3.
7. B.E. Kipkorir, "Mau Mau and the Politics of the Transfer of Power in Kenya 1957-1960." Unpublished paper.
8. *Ibid.*
9. B.A. Ogot, "Politics, Culture and Music in Central Kenya: A Study of Mau Mau Hymns: 1951-1956." Chairman's address to the Annual Conference of the Historical Association of Kenya, 1976, p.10.
10. Bolsover p. 4.
11. Mathu, p. 17.
12. "I have closely watched the activities of our political leaders and am not happy with much of what I see. Much of the money collected overseas or from our poor peasants and workers at political rallies and *Harambee* projects goes into the pockets of politicians for their personal use instead of for the development of the country and the welfare of our people. Some leaders are becoming rich Africans, driving around in fancy cars, building new houses in the city and using our money for women, drink, and foreign travel." See Mathu's book, p. 83.
13. Mathu, p. 17.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
15. "Even though most of Kīmaathi's writings and speeches were burned by the colonial regime, there are individuals who have some of

Kīmaathi's papers in their private collections. We were lucky enough to be allowed to examine some of these papers. In their recent publication, *A Bibliography on Mau Mau*, p. 75, M.S. Clough and K.A. Jackson, Jr. inform us that, "There appear to be a few copies in private possession of the *Dedan Kīmaathi Papers*." See also *Kenya's Freedom Struggle: The Dedan Kīmaathi Papers*, ed. Maina wa Kīnyattī, Zed Books, London, 1987.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
17. We learned that the Government had started using propaganda to defeat us. We agreed to start campaigns against Government propaganda...The first one was a copy of a letter written to Fenner Brockway...The letter accused the British Government of giving their forces and the Kenya settlers authority and arms to shoot the Africans." See Njama's *Mau Mau: From Within*, p. 357.
18. In his article, "Mau Mau A Case Study of Kenya Nationalism," *Africa Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No.1, (April-June 1968), pp. 10-25, D.P. Singh has extracts from this Document. He refers to the Document as "Mau Mau Charter." The Document was particularly sent to Mbiyū Koinange and Fenner Brockway to present it to the United Nations.
19. *Hūmungaati* were those Kenyans who fought on the side of the British during the Mau Mau war of national independence. Literally the word means "home guards." But to the people of Kenya it means traitors.

## WE CANNOT FORGET THE PAST

That in view of the invaluable role played by the Freedom fighters in extricating this nation from the yoke of colonialism, and further noting that most of these emancipators lost their property and consequently they are now living in total misery, Warūru wa Kanja tables the motion in Parliament, this House unreservedly records its indebtedness to the liberation movement and resolves to appoint a select committee on the Mau Mau war [with the following aims]: (a) determine and recommend what financial assistance or otherwise should be given to the Freedom Fighters who were maimed during the struggle for national independence; and (b) ascertain the genuineness and extent of the claims of those whose land was confiscated by the colonial regime on account of their involvement in the struggle with a view to providing needy and deserving cases with land or compensating them in lieu thereof.

This is a very important motion and people like Mr. Ochwada should be thankful because if it were not for [the Mau Mau] they would not have been here today. The background of political independence is that we tried every possible means peacefully, and the colonial regime would not play ball with us. So what was left to the Africans in this country was to organize themselves underground and take an [anti-imperialist] oath with a view to emancipate our own people [from colonial enslavement], so that we can be free in a free country.

The people of this country got together and vowed that they will fight to the bitter end for political independence and get back the land that had been snatched by the white colonial regime.

This motion, therefore, is asking for nothing more than our rightful share of what we (freedom fighters) fought for: land. We went to the forest to fight, and during the course of this bitter struggle

many of us were disabled and maimed; others were hanged. I am one of those who were fortunate because I was condemned to death but I am still living today.

This motion is therefore asking the Government to agree and concede that those who fought for independence—so that we may be free today, are still suffering [psychologically and economically] in their villages and have not been rewarded for their patriotic sacrifices. I am not, for a moment, however, saying that the Government has not helped many people in this country with settlement plots. But, what is the percentage of the [landless] people living in the villages? Are they not the people who fought for freedom? Did they fight for freedom only to come from detention [and forest] and live in [dire poverty] in their villages? What a shame! If one knew he would go to the forest to fight against the enemy's bombs and then come back to live in poverty in the village, none would have joined the liberation army.

I am, therefore, calling upon the Government—my government—to appreciate what freedom fighters did for this country and help them economically, particularly the disabled and maimed.

History will be narrated in future and we shall be condemned for having taken a wrong stance. We must honor and recognize the freedom fighters if we want history to be kind to us in the future.

Our country is still dominated by foreigners, the same evil forces Mau Mau was trying to remove. We must call a spade a spade and tell them to leave. I would hate to see my son going back to prison and be condemned because [of trying to] fight for what I fought for. At any rate, I would like to suggest that with immediate effect (Oh, I see that the Minister for Education is gone) we must start teaching our children about the rebirth of our nation and they must be taught about those great men [and women] who fought for national independence, so that they may feel proud and know that they are free [today because of the Mau Mau heroism]. They must also know, since they are the leaders of tomorrow, that our freedom did not [come on] a golden platter, nor was it handed to us by someone who had courtesy or loved us. We fought for it.

Our men [and women] firmly told the British. "No, we are human beings and this is our land." We took bows and arrows and robbed them of any guns we could get and fought them without compromise.

Now, my question, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is: are we going to set up a select committee to inquire into the social conditions of the freedom fighters and make recommendations based on the two issues mentioned in the beginning of my speech.

[“..Forget the past!” one M.P. shouted.]

We are not going to forget the past. Everything has a start, and you cannot forget your birthday. You still celebrate your birthday, Warūru concluded.

When the motion was put to vote, it was overwhelmingly defeated. According to Warūru the “honorable” members left the house jubilantly singing—

*Harambee! Harambee!  
Kanu yajenga nchi. . .*

and then went into the parliament Bar and Restaurant to dine and wine for the job well done.

Since independence, writes Durrani, there have been persistent attempts to suppress the history of the Mau Mau almost as if the memory of the armed struggle was an acute embarrassment to those who took over the State. [For instance], under [the] Kenyatta regime it was almost treasonable to mention the anti-imperialist character and content of the Mau Mau or to dwell on its commitment to the agrarian reform and social change. Under Daniel Moi, the KANU regime went even further. In 1985, [it] banned any public debates and discussions of the Mau Mau struggle (Shiraz Durrani: unpublished manuscript). Because of the KANU regime’s anti-Mau Mau line and the intellectual advocates of the University of Nairobi school of thought, the heroism and martyrdom of the Mau Mau, upto this day, have not been incorporated into national history, social and cultural institutions. It is also important to mention here that Mau Mau as a political movement is still proscribed in Kenya.

Fundamentally, it is not possible to forget the precious blood we shed for national independence—to forget the beauty and fortitude of our anti-imperialist struggle, to forget that in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Africa we were the first country to take arms against British imperialism, and that it was our courage and determination, consis-

tency and firmness which forced the British imperialists to liberalize their colonial agenda in Africa and accept the principles of human equality and national independence.



**Mau Mau guerrillas.** Their patriotic efforts and sacrifices were betrayed the Kenyatta-KANU government.

## THE SECRET BRITISH FILE ON MAKHAN SINGH

10th October 1961

CM (61) 637

Council of Ministers

The Deportation of (Immigrant British Subjects) Ordinance, 1949

### **Makhan Singh**

Memorandum by the Minister of Defense

1. Makhan Singh, a Sikh trade unionist, who has been restricted under the Deportation (Immigrant British Subjects) Ordinance since 1950 following a judicial inquiry into his subversive activities, presents a special problem in relation to the Government's policy of releasing all "long service: restricted persons by progressive stages." A detailed history of his career in Kenya is attached.
2. Makhan Singh has rightly been described as an able, shrewd and interverate Communist agitator and, though his behavior in restriction has been exemplary apart from periodic hunger strikes, he has made it clear that he will never change his Communist views.
3. The case against Makhan Singh is that he is a life-long fanatical communist and a trained agitator who intends, immediately on release to start again where he left off. He will seek to exploit every weakness and difference within the trade union movement and to disrupt every effort at moderation. In particular he will doubtless direct his efforts: (a) to rallying and encouraging those Asian members of the Kenya Freedom Party who have Communist leanings and contacts; (b) to seeking out and encouraging prominent Africans with Communist affiliations and to providing additional stiffening

and expertise for their campaigns; (c) to lending additional weight and knowledge to the increase of Communist penetration of the trade union movement in Kenya; and (d) to encouraging the more radical elements of the community, such as the Ginger Action Group, Youth leagues, etc.

4. It can, however, be argued that, in the circumstances of Kenya today, it is unlikely that a non-African, however fanatical, would emerge as a leader capable of stirring up the masses. There is also the point that if Makhan Singh is to revert to type it is better that this should happen at an early date. On balance, and in view of the length of time during which Makhan Singh has been under restriction, I consider that he should be released now.

5. The council of Ministers is accordingly invited to consider the case of Makhan Singh and, taking into consideration his history, his period of restriction in Kenya and his assessment as a security risk, advise whether the restriction order under the Deportation (Immigrant British Subjects) Ordinance, 1949, which is in force against him, should be revoked forthwith or whether he should continue in restriction.

#### Case History of Makhan Singh

1. Makhan Singh was born in the Punjab in 1913. He arrived in Kenya in 1927 and came to notice in 1934 as the holder of advanced Communist views and through his correspondence with a prominent agitator in India. He visited India in 1935 but returned to Kenya in 1936 when he became involved in various communist activities including, it is thought, acting as a forwarding and receiving agent for Sikh students undergoing revolutionary training in Moscow.

2. He returned to India in 1939 and remained there until 1947. During this period he was detained for subversive activities under the Defense of Indian Rules from 1940 to 1942, and subsequently restricted to his village until 1945. On release he worked for the communist party in Lahore. He came back to Kenya in 1947 and was arrested and restricted under the Deportation (Immigrant Brit-

ish Subjects) Ordinance in 1950, following his attempt to engineer a general strike in protest against the refusal to register a trade union of which he and Fred Kubai were leaders.

3. Many months prior to this attempted general strike, it became apparent that Makhan Singh was trying to gain control of organized labor in Kenya through the medium of his own Labor Trade Union of East Africa, and through the East African Trade Union Congress which he also directed. His object appeared to be to control labor to an extent, which would enable him to call a general strike, and to paralyze communications and essential services at what he considered an opportune moment. In accordance with the now familiar Communist technique, he lost no opportunity either of suggesting or manufacturing grievances, or of exploiting any that existed.

4. In order to produce an atmosphere favorable to a general strike and to consequent rioting and violence, it was necessary on the one hand that he should be hailed as the champion of the poor against the rich, of the workers against the employers in general and the European in particular; and that the maximum possible hostility and ill-will should be engendered in the minds of African workers against the Government, the City Council of Nairobi, employers, and Europeans generally. To this end, Makhan Singh published articles in the press, disseminated pamphlets and repeatedly addressed African audiences. He told them, *inter alia*, that HMG was a "foreign power who had no right to rule in Kenya," that the Kenya [Colonial Government] had introduced slavery, and that secret plans were being hatched to take more African land for the City of Nairobi. He told Asians that vast bases were being prepared for the re-conquest of India. In every speech he exalted Russia as the land of freedom and exhorted his hearers to strike if he himself were arrested.

5. In particular, in the months prior to May 1950, he organized and whipped up the opposition of Nairobi taxi-driver against certain proposed Municipal Council regulations to control the operation of taxicabs, and endeavored to organize a boycott of the civic celebrations which took place in March 1950, during the visit to Kenya of the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester on the occasion of the conferment of a Charter raising Nairobi to the status of a city. In October,

1949, the Transport and Allied Workers Union, led by Fred Kubai, brought the taxi-drivers out on strike. A disturbing feature of the attempted, and largely unsuccessful, boycott of the civic celebrations, was that shots were fired at two prominent Africans during Civic week—at Municipal Councilor Gikonyo, who made loyal speeches and took a prominent part in welcoming their Royal Highness on behalf of the African community; and at Tom Mbotela, who was a moderating influence within the Kenya African Union, and who was subsequently murdered by Mau Mau during the early days of the Emergency. There was a reason to believe that Kubai at least was a party to the shootings and he was subsequently prosecuted (unsuccessfully) on charges of attempted murder and procuring attempted murder.

6. In May, 1950, Makhan Singh and Fred Kubai were arrested, Makhan Singh on a warrant under the Deportation (Immigrant British Subjects) Ordinance, and Fred Kubai under the Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Ordinance. As had been foreseen, these arrests precipitated a strike in Nairobi which lasted for a little over a week. Although no serious incidents or injuries occurred, the strike, which was also remarkable for its intimidation, showed that Makhan Singh's influence and organizing ability were considerable. In the proceedings against Makhan Singh under the Deportation (Immigrant British Subjects) Ordinance, a judge duly reported to the Governor in Council that Makhan Singh was an "undesirable person" within the meaning of every part of that expression as defined in the Deportation (Immigrant British Subjects) Ordinance, 1949. The judge made a recommendation for a restriction order, a recommendation that was subsequently accepted by the Governor in Council. Makhan Singh has been restricted ever since at Lokitaung, Lodwar, Maralal and Ndol Dol.

**Author's Note:** Makhan Singh was released in October 1961 unrepentant. Since he had admitted during the police interrogation in 1950 that he was a communist, the Kenyatta-KANU neocolonial regime listed him as "a dangerous man, a subversive, a communist," and like many of us today, denied him a job in government and assigned police informers to trail him. He died in poverty and, like Kimaathi, Fred Kubai and many other freedom fighters, was not given a national burial.

## APPENDIX A: Kenya Colonial Detention and Concentration Centers 1952-1963

### Nairobi Province

1. Lang'ata Concentration Center
2. Lukenya Special Detention Center (Kwa Luvai)
3. Athi River Concentration Center
4. Kamiti Women Concentration Center
5. Kamiti Men Concentration Center

### Northern Province

1. Marsabit Detention Center
2. Lodwar Detention Center
3. Lokitaung Detention Center

### Coast Province

1. Manyani Concentration Center
2. MacKinnon Road Concentration Center
3. Manda Island Concentration Center
4. Takwa Island Concentration Center
5. Mukowe Concentration Center
6. Hola Special Detention Center

### Nyanza Province

1. Mageta Island Concentration Center
2. Sayusi Island Concentration Center

### Rift Valley

1. Kajiado Concentration Center
2. Malingat Concentration Center
3. Nyangwethu Concentration Center

Eastern Province and Kīrīnyaga District

1. Yatta Concentration Center
2. Mwea Concentration Center
3. Tabere Concentration Center
4. Gathigiriri Concentration Center
5. Karaba Concentration Center
6. Thiiba Concentration Center
7. Kandongu Concentration Center

Central Province

1. Waithaka Detention Center (Kīambuu)
2. Gīthūngūri Detention Center (Kīambuu)
3. Kīrigiti Detention Center (Kīambuu)
4. Ndīiya Detention Center (Kīambuu)
5. Lari Detention Center (Kīambuu)
6. Mūrang'a Concentration Center (Mūrang'a)
7. Kīgumo Detention Center (Mūrang'a)
8. Gīthumu Detention Center (Mūrang'a)
9. Kaamaguta Detention Center (Mūrang'a)
10. Mariīra Detention Center (Mūrang'a)
11. Makūyū Detention Center (Mūrang'a)
12. Kangūbiri Detention Center (Nyīrī)
13. Karaatina Detention Center (Nyīrī)
14. Mbaainī Detention Center (Nyīrī)
15. Mwerū Detention Center (Nyīrī)
16. Úthaaya Detention Center (Nyīrī)

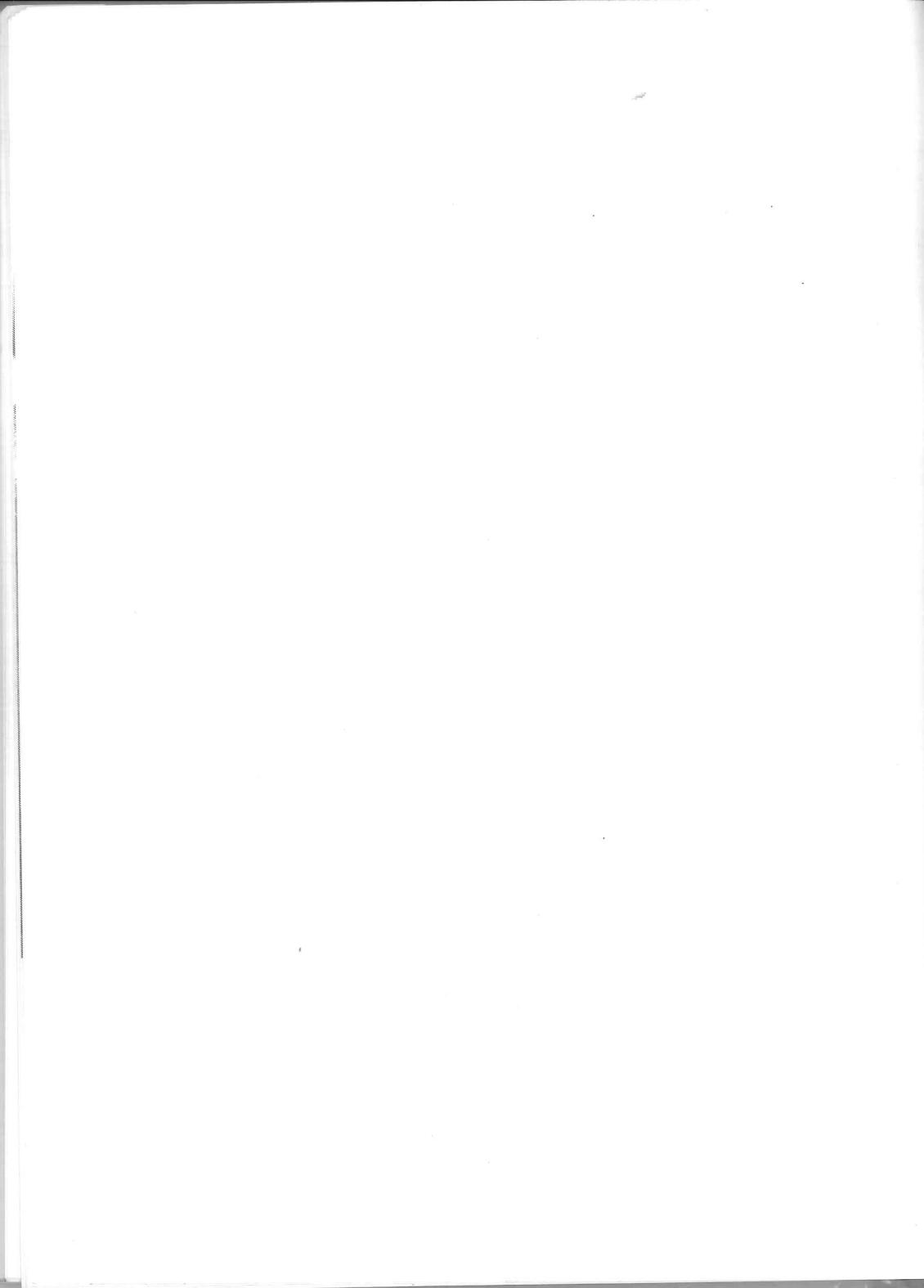
NOTES

1. Our conservative estimate is that more than 200,000 Kenyans, majority of them from the old Central Province, were imprisoned without trials, 20,000 or more were tried and jailed for their memberships in the movement, 10,000 or more were executed by hanging and not to mention tens of thousands who died in jails and

*Appendix A*

prisons, detention and concentration camps from untreated diseases, starvation and brutal tortures.

Many more were killed in the urban centers, villages and on European plantations; and countless numbers of our people disappeared without trace.



## APPENDIX B: Chronology

1944: The Kenya African Union (KAU) was formed as a national front against British occupation.

1946: Kenyatta returned from Britain and became KAU president in 1947.

1947: Cege wa Kibacia, the leader of the working class movement, was arrested and imprisoned by the British occupiers without trial until 1960.

1950: The East African Trade Union was proscribed because of its anti-imperialist line. Its leader, Makhan Singh, was imprisoned without trial until 1961.

1950: The militant youth within the anti-imperialist movement took over the KAU leadership and secretly started organizing for the armed resistance against British imperialism.

1951: The Mau Mau Central Committee was formed under the leadership of Eliud Mũtonyi, Isaac Maina Gathanju, Bildad Kaggia, Fred Kubai, Stanley Mathenge, and Enock Mwangi. At the same year, Mbiyũ wa Koinange and Achieng' Oneko were sent to the colonial office in London by the Party to negotiate for transfer of State power to the African majority. The constitutional deputation was dismissed by the British authorities.

April 1952: Wanjohi wa Kamau was the first freedom fighter to die during the armed confrontation between the British and the Mau Mau forces in Nairobi.

June 1952: The freedom fighters started entering Nyandarwa and Kĩrĩnyaga forests.

Sept. 1952: A KLFA guerrilla unit attacked the white agricultural regime in Timau, burned plantations and confiscated livestock.

Oct. 1952: British imperialism declared war on Mau Mau. The KAU leaders - Jomo Kenyatta, Bildad Kaggia, Fred Kubai, Paul Ngei, Achieng' Oneko and Kung'ũ wa Karũmba were arrested and imprisoned until 1960.

Oct. 1952: Enemy's paramilitary police, *Warūrūngana*, were deployed in Nairobi and central Kenya and ordered to shoot-to-kill Mau Mau suspects. At the same time the British troops arrived in Kenya in hundreds in an attempt to derail the war of independence.

Nov. 1952: The Mūrang'a people in defiance held a political rally at Kīrware, Kīgumo Division. When they refused to disperse police opened fire. 30 people were killed, 50 were seriously injured and 350 were arrested and imprisoned. The independent schools were forced to close down by the colonial authorities. In the same month, a KLFA guerrilla column attacked and burned down the enemy police post in Gaturi, Mūrang'a. The Kagoci enemy post on the foot of Kīrīnya Mountain was also overran by the KLFA guerrillas. Tom Mbotela, a KAU quisling, was apprehended by the Mau Mau cadres in Nairobi and executed.

1953: The KLFA forces under commander Mbaria attacked and overran the enemy police post in Naivasha township.

1954: General China, the Kīrīnya KLFA commander-in-Chief was shot and captured by the enemy. In April 25, Operation Anvil offensive against Mau Mau was staged by the enemy forces in Nairobi City and its surroundings. More than 200,000 Gīkūyū, Merū and Embu workers were sent to concentration camps. In November the Gīkūyū, Embu and Merū were issued with a "special identification document" (passport) and required to produce it whenever stopped by colonial authorities. The British, using the information obtained from General China, started training pseudo-guerrillas at Kīganjo Police Training College. In September, the KLFA force attacked and overran Lukenya Prison and freed the political prisoners. General Kago was killed in the battle of Irati, Mūrang'a, and in Nyīrī, General Kariba was captured and executed by the British at Kamītī Maximum Security and buried in an unmarked grave.

1955: Stanley Mathenge and his counter-revolutionary group were arrested by the Kenya parliament leadership for trial, but they managed to break from prison and escaped. Later in the year, Mathenge's force was ambushed by the enemy platoon and suffered heavy casualties. Mathenge was among the dead.

1956: Field Marshal Dedan Kīmaathi was shot and captured by the British occupiers on October 20 and was executed on February 18, 1957, at Kamītī Maximum Prison and buried in an unmarked grave.

1959: Hola detention camp massacre occurred.

1960: KANU and KADU, formed. KADU under Moi's chairmanship took a pro-British line.

1961: The KAU leadership, except Bildad Kaggia, released. Kenyatta became KANU President.

1963: Kenya became an independent nation under the Kenyatta-KANU leadership.

1964: Pio Gama Pinto was assassinated by a government paid agent. The murderous plan was organized by the KANU circles in conjunction with the CIA. Tom Mboya played a crucial role in assassination.

1966: Kenya People's Union Party (KPU) launched under the leadership of Oginga Odinga and Bildad Kaggia in an effort to prevent the betrayal of independence by Kenyatta and his henchmen.

1969: The battle of succession to Kenyatta intensified. In the process, Tom Mboya was assassinated.

1975: J. M. Kariuki was grisly murdered by Kenyatta's men. In an attempt to cover the murder, the security force planted a bomb inside a public bus (OTC) which killed more than 27 innocent Kenyans and many more were seriously injured. The government accused JM's followers of planting the bomb.

1975: December Twelve Movement (DTM) was formed underground to challenge the KANU dictatorship.

1978: Unexpectedly, Kenyatta died. Moi became Kenya's second President.

1982: DTM published two important political documents: *Independent Kenya* and *Pambana*, and secretly distributed them nationwide. The documents denounced the Moi-KANU dictatorship and called for its overthrow. In response, the neo-colonial regime ordered the arrest of six university academics in June (Kamoji wa Waciira, Al-Amin Mazrui, Willy Mutunga, Mükaru wa Ng'ang'a, Edward Oyugi, and Maina wa Kinyatti) with the accusation of teaching "foreign ideology" and were imprisoned with or without trial. John Khaminwa, a patriotic lawyer was also imprisoned without trial. In August, the Moi regime crushed the air force attempted coup and intensified repression against Kenyans.

1985: DTM changed its name to Mwakenya. In Prison and abroad Mwakenya's branch-cells were constructed.

- 1986: Crackdown on Mwakenya and other progressive, anti-KANU forces intensified. Torture-chambers built in Nyayo House, Nairobi, to combat the patriotic, anti-neo-colonial movement. International campaign over human rights violations in Kenya was intensified by Mwakenya's Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners in Kenya (CRPPK), Amnesty International and other world human rights organization.
- 1989: Mwakenya's London Branch released two published documents: *Moi's Reign of Terror: A Decade of Nyayo Crimes Against the People of Kenya* and *Struggle for Democracy in Kenya* which exposed the barbarism of Moi's regime. The same year, the CRPPK changed it's name to Umoja wa Kupigania Demokrasia Kenya (UKenya).
- 1991: Democracy movement gained strength inside the country. Oginga Odinga and other liberal nationalists launched the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD). Unable to halt our people's struggle for democracy, the Moi regime was compelled to scrap section 2a of the constitution, establishing a multi-party political system.
- 1992: Mushrooming of political parties and human rights organizations organized and funded by the western imperialist financial institutions in order to derail the revolutionary struggle for democracy and social justice. Temporarily, the imperialist strategy has succeeded.

## APPENDIX C: The British Armed forces Engaged in the Mau Mau War (1952-1965)

1. The Lancashire Fusiliers
2. The Buffs and Battalions.
3. The Devonshire Regiment.
4. The Black Watch.
5. 39, 49 and 70 Brigade Battalions.
6. The Royal North Umberland Fusiliers.
7. 39 Corps Engineer Regiment.
8. 73 Independent Field Squadron.
9. The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.
10. The Rifle Brigade.
11. The Gloucestershire Regiment.
12. The King's Shropshire Light Infantry.
13. South African Troops.
14. Nyasaland, North and South Rhodesian Troops.
15. British Air Force Battalion equipped with heavy bombers—  
Harvard Lincoln Jets, etc.
16. Canadian, New Zealand, and Australian Troops.
17. International white Mercenaries.

### Local British Forces:

1. 3rd, 5th, 7th, 23rd, 26th King's African Rifle Battalions (Kenya Colonial Armies).
2. 4th King's African Rifle Battalion (From Uganda, General Amin was in this Battalion).
3. 6th King's African Rifle Battalion (From Tanganyika)
4. Kenya White Regiment.
5. *Warūrūngana*: Paramilitary police force recruited exclusively from Northern and Kalenjin regions.
6. The E.A. Armored Car Squadron and the (E.A.) heavy anti-aircraft batter.
7. Tribal Police (TP) recruited from central Kenya (Gikuyū, Embu, Merū, Mbeere and Kamba). In the urban centers, this force was multi-ethnic.

8. *Hūmungaati* Battalion mainly based in central Kenya and the European occupied areas of the Rift Valley.
9. Multi-ethnic regular police force under a white commander.
10. Counterinsurgency Intelligence Force led by Ian Henderson and L.S.B. Leakey.
11. Special forces such as *Tai-tai*, *Tūkonia*, Fascist murder squads, white militia, Asian Militia and pro-British political organizations such as the Maendeleo ya Wanawake organization, Kenya Federation of Labor, Torch Bearer Organization, Christian religious organizations and colonial propaganda machinery.

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